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SPIRITUALISM AND ITS REMEDY.

THE characteristic error of our age is its rejection and denial of the supernatural. It is the error that is vitiating modern philosophy, distorting science, degrading literature, and undermining government. Philosophy has fallen from her high plane as handmaid of faith to the level of panderer to the wildest vagaries of the human intellect. Led captive by materialism, she no longer defends the spirituality and the immortality of the soul, the essential freedom of the will, or the true idea of the Creator and His relations with His creatures. The various schools of philosophy outside the Church have virtually given up the battle to the enemies of God and man. So too, science, whose province is to show forth the Creator in Nature, has betrayed her trust, and instead of revealing man to us as the brother of the Incarnate Word, exhibits him as a higher development of the ape. In vain do we look in recent literature, in any of its forms, for that lofty spirituality which distinguishes the productions of even the heathen mind. Our poetry is sensuous; our fiction, thinly-veiled immorality; our history, crude speculation; our press and literature, materialistic. The religious principles which underlie all governmental science and civil polity have been supplanted by revolutionary theories destructive of social order, and fatal to all legitimate rule.

That these evils are not imaginary no one acquainted with the prevailing spirit of our times will deny. That they can be traced to the influence of materialism as exerted in the domain of modern thought no one, even partly conversant with current philosophy and science, will question. The English universities, wherein the modern English mind is shaped, openly teach a philosophy which is materialistic in its nature and effects. The American public educational system wholly excludes the religious element in study; whilst the position of the Church in France, Italy, and Germany bears mournful testimony to the power of an error which is pledged to uproot all religion as incumbering the ground.

As a counter-influence to this spirit of naturalism and materialism, the Almighty, in our day, has

given two wonderful manifestations of the supernatural. The first is the Catholic Church, which, though unsupported to-day by a single earthly power, unbefriended by a single government, unaided by a single human force, still maintains its wonderful life. Until within a recent period, France, Italy, Spain, and Austria lent each its aid to uphold the Catholic faith within their realms. The Pope possessed his temporal sovereignty, ruled his fold in comparative security, and found means to support his modest household and official state. To-day, none of those governments recognizes the Church, provides for its maintenance, or encourages its labors. The Pope is a prisoner, and more than ever dependent for his temporal needs on the contributions of the faithful throughout the world.

Yet whilst thus bereft of all natural means to preserve her existence, the Church never manifested her supernatural life and divine institution more clearly or more strikingly than now. With no earthly grandeur or wordly prestige to awaken enthusiasm in his cause, the Pope was never more truly loved, more sincerely reverenced, than he is to-day, when sorrow and trial, humiliation and misfortune, are upon him. Never before was the Episcopacy so thoroughly one; the Church so much herself; the faithful so devoted to her cause and so jealous of her honor. The desertion of princes has been the signal for the gathering together of the people to her side. The departure of a few traitors has only served to strengthen the allegiance of all. In the course of nature, she should have perished before now. Like all institutions dependent on human aid, she should have illustrated the law of dissolution which holds sway when that aid is withdrawn. That she still survives, apparently in undiminished strength, is a problem which materialism is seeking to explain; for some supernatural, providential agency must be upholding an institution which clearly lacks all natural and human supports. The continued and vigorous existence of the Church is thus, in our day, an overwhelming manifestation of the supernatural. Contemplating this sublime work, infidel philosophy and science stand puzzled and silent. The Church remains, the sole survivor of two thousand years. No mark of age is on her brow; there is no token of departing strength; she seems as powerful as when kings encircled her throne, and emperors cast their crowns at her feet. She is thus the contradiction of naturalism. Before this luminous proof of the abiding presence of God in the world, this evidence of the existence of a Power and Might transcending the natural order, both materialism and naturalism shrink back blinded and affrighted.

But there is, in the world, another manifestation of the supernatural—a manifestation the direct reverse of that given by the Church—a manifestation of evil. Partly as a disproof of materialsm and partly as a punishment, God at present permits the infernal powers to manifest themselves on earth. This revelation of hell is Spiritualism. The Church shows forth the divine supernaturalism; Spiritualism, the devilish. The one meets material-

ism with the proofs of the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, the merciful and benevolent action of heavenly providence, the ministry of blessed spirits, and the truth of religion and revelation. The other meets materialism with the proof of the existence of a supernatural organization as malevolent as it is powerful; the presence in the world of the powers and principalities of darkness; the foul mission of spirits shut out forever from peace and happiness; a world beyond, which holds communication with this, and in this communication bears testimony to truths and doctrines which materialism scouts and derides. If the unbelieving world is not drawn into truth by the graciousness and sweetness of the Church, it will be terrified into despair by the gloom and horror which Spiritism spreads wherever it takes up its abode.

Out of this evil which he permits, God will draw good. The modern mind has rejected the blessed supernaturalism which the Church unfolds. It must yield a shuddering and profitless testimony to the Satanic supernaturalism which Spiritualism everywhere discloses.

Before directly examining the portentous character of this infernal system or arriving at any tangible conclusions regarding its mission and work, several principles must be laid down, and certain propositions established. Materialism regards Spiritualism as either adroit jugglery or the erratic action of certain occult natural laws. The reason of the denial is not found in a laudable and justifiable incredulity, but in an *à priori* resolve not to believe in anything that transcends the physical laws. Spiritualism is jugglery, because it claims to be supernatural. Its manifestations belong to the sphere of the circus-clown and the vulgar conjuror, because communication with the "spirit world" is simply preposterous, from the fact that there is no such world. This is the tone adopted by the materialistic press in discussing the subject. Thus the *London Saturday Review*, in an article commenting on the report of a society which recently undertook the investigation of Spiritualism in England, indulges in a tirade directed not so much against the report or the committee as against the "degrading superstition" of believing that the alleged spirit manifestations were "even possible."

This persistent denial of the bad supernatural element which unquestionably pervades Spiritualism has blinded thousands to its real character, and drawn thousands of others within its baleful influence, under the delusion that at most it is only the cleverest form of trickery. Even Catholics, who know, or ought to know, the teaching of the Church on the power and ministry of evil spirits, have not hesitated to tamper with the unholy mysteries and subject themselves to the unhallowed influences. The possibility of the actions and scenes said to be enacted in spiritualistic *seances* is only too well established. Aside from the detailed descriptions given in Holy Writ of the apparitions, power, subtlety, and malevolence of evil spirits, the whole course of tradition, the universal consent of the human mind, the presence of magic and sorcery

in all countries and in every age, bear testimony to the action on the world of spirits of darkness and mischief. If we are to reject the constant and universal testimony to, and consent and belief in, the existence and workings of malevolent spiritual beings, certitude, both intellectual and historical, becomes impossible. Despite the fable and illusion which surround magic, witchcraft, and charms; notwithstanding the ignorance which frequently ascribes to diabolic art effects which flow from purely natural causes, there remains a deep-rooted conviction in the human mind that there are spiritual agencies in the world capable of producing results and effects which cannot be explained by physical reasons. We cannot, logically or philosophically, say that this profound conviction, which is as firm in the intellect of civilized and enlightened peoples as it is in that of barbarous and ignorant ones, is false or unfounded; for one of the clearest axioms of certitude is the inability of the universal human mind to accept and hold to falsehood as truth. It is idle, therefore, to explain away Spiritualism on the ground of the impossibility of the revelations which it makes. If the testimony that it gives to the operations of the spirit world possesses the marks of truth, it must be accepted.

What, then, is its testimony? First of all, there are in America alone eleven millions of Spiritualists, each one professing his faith in the general truth of its creed, and appealing to his own experience in confirmation. We cannot for a moment admit that mere charlatanism could hold captive such a number, and inspire them with the faith and trust that they evidently possess. It is moreover false that the vast majority of Spiritualists are weak-minded, ignorant, and gullible fools. On the contrary, many of the brightest minds in the country are subject to its evil power; and it has as full a proportion as other sects have of respectable, intelligent, and sincere believers. When we consider the brainless ridicule to which they are exposed, the social ostracism which they suffer in many quarters, the disgrace which the crimes of their leading "mediums" have brought on the entire body, we are forced to recognize the fearful power of some influence over them, the terrible presence of some overmastering charm, which thus enables them to brave ridicule, loss of caste, and disgrace. It is absurd to suppose that sham, vulgar magic, or still more vulgar jugglery, could exercise such a fascination.

Can the testimony borne by these millions to supernatural manifestations, be accompanied by the conditions necessary to establish the authority of a witness? May they not be deceived? Is imposture out of the question? Once brought to the test of historic criticism, the main facts of Spiritism are unimpeachable; for in the general, consistent, and ingenuous declarations of countless spiritualists, we find all the conditions of trustworthy evidence fulfilled. Nor does the supernatural character of the occurrences witnessed, render testimony inadmissible. The continuity of physical laws, and the undeviating course of nature, is a

sure guarantee that in the violent and total suspension or reversion of their action, a supernatural power is at work. The perception of such suspension is physical, and may be certified precisely as all perceptions and sensations are.

To illustrate this, we subjoin an extract from Emma Hardinge's book on Spiritualism. It is a description of an incident which took place at a spiritualistic circle. The persons concerned in it are of eminent respectability, the narrator being a distinguished lawyer, at present practicing in Nevada. It appears that he and a friend, who was a skeptic, were visiting the house of a wealthy Californian merchant, when they summoned to the circle a murdered friend. He appeared precisely as in life, and in his usual attire, but when his living friend attempted to grasp him, "every article in the house seemed to be set in motion as if by the shock of an earthquake," and the spectre instantly disappeared. On another occasion, the same gentleman at the same house, in company with a numerous party of spiritualists, formed a circle at which there appeared, in material form, a spirit, recognized as that of a person who had died in the vicinity some years before. The apparition is thus described:

"It was scarcely twenty seconds after the raps had ended, when the door-bell rang furiously, and at the same time a bush, growing within a few feet of the window, was shaken so violently as to fix all our attention upon it, in the fear that it would be torn up by the roots. Then we (having our attention fixed on the bush) distinctly, and all together, saw a gigantic human figure, apparently rising and emerging from the bush, issue out into the broad moonlight, pass within two feet of the window before our eyes, and glide off towards the kitchen. By a common impulse, we all rose and rushed to the window, but only in time to see the figure melt out and another rise up, as it were, out of the ground, and immediately seat itself upon a bench before the kitchen door, and full in the glare of the moonlight.

"And here I would fain pause, for I have no words adequate to describe what I then saw; and though its memory will be forever engraved on my brain I can neither communicate in words the least reality of it, nor yet attempt its description without subjecting myself to the charge of the wildest exaggeration. . . . . It certainly bore the human form though in distorted and frightful disproportion. It was of gigantic height and frightfully lean. Its face was hideously long, thin, and distorted, blacker than any idea of blackness I have ever seen before; but its expression I can never portray. I can only say it was an appalling mixture of rage, hate, and despair so shocking that I cannot at any time attempt to recall it without a sickening sensation of horror. It was terrible to look on, horrible to think of, and I hope my mortal eyes will never again be blighted by so hideous a spectre. He wore a large white robe thrown fully around him and partly covering his immense, long lean head; and there he sat, reclining on the bench, full in the moonlight, silent, still, and ghastly in all his appal-

ling ugliness. The face was turned to us somewhat in profile. . . . . After looking on the goblin—for human I can never think it—till the sight overpowered me, I rushed to the piazza door, feeling the necessity for air. I was followed by the ladies, who were almost fainting; but on attempting to unfasten the door, which Mr. J. P. had opened with perfect ease but a few moments before, we found it barricaded. Mr. B., the bravest among us, save Mr. J. P., remained watching the goblin, as did the family up stairs, till they saw it gradually and slowly melt out. They never lost sight of it till it disappeared. As we retreated, the sofas, chairs, tables, cushions, globes, and mathematical instruments were hurled about in every direction with great violence. . . . . Mr. J. P. and his wife now joined me at the door, and after great exertion we succeeded in forcing it partly open, when we found that the heavy iron gate at the entrance of the grounds had been literally torn up out of its sockets, and placed bodily against the piazza door. This must have been done in a few moments, since one of the servants had just passed through and fastened it. It must have been accomplished without noise, though it would have taken several men to achieve such a feat, and we had sat opposite it with the moon shining full on it, the whole period of the circle. . . . . (As for the disappearance of the spectre) Mr. B. stood within eight feet of it, and just as we approached the kitchen door, he saw, as did those above, the creature rise with slow deliberation, standing a moment still, as if to display its enormous height, then, lightly lifting its robe, it seemed to float off a little way, and then instantly in the clear space it became invisible. There were four witnesses of this scene (viz., of the disappearance), and each gave a precisely similar account when questioned separately."

Here then is a description of an occurrence which is manifestly out of the natural order. It is witnessed by a number of persons whose initials and general characteristics are given with sufficient clearness to fix their identity. The place is mentioned (Russian Hill), the house described, and in a note, the additional information is imparted that "it was noted as the haunt and stronghold of spirit noises, meetings, and apparitions, during which hundreds of the townspeople collected nightly about the neighborhood. The occupant was obliged, in consequence, to procure a number of fierce watch-dogs, and a staff of policemen to guard his property."

The scene enacted is not of a character to reflect credit upon Spiritism, an evil and hurtful spirit being the chief actor therein. Such apparitions would be likely to damage the creed which "is destined to perfect mankind." That publicity was given to such an incident in a description than which nothing can be more explicit and truth-seeming by persons known to their community, and enjoying a reputation as honest and veracious men, are points in favor of accepting the narration which the sternest and most exacting of judges could not overrule.

Were this an isolated case, how-

ever, the incredulous might be justified in holding out. But it is only the type of a class of apparitions daily and nightly happening within the spiritualistic circle. The historian of Spiritualism, Miss Hardinge, from whose book we have already quoted, reluctantly chronicles spirit apparitions as fearful as that described above, and admits that such apparitions are of frequent occurrence. Forced to explain away the diabolical nature of such apparitions, she resorts to the vain subterfuge "of there being a still wider field of Spiritualism occupied by beings of an unknown and doubtful character, and mixed up with phenomena of a strange, occult, and repulsive character."

The conclusions reached, therefore, are that supernatural manifestations are possible, that they actually take place, in our day, within the circle of Spiritualism, and that they are in general of a character which marks them as of some wicked and malicious agency. We have shown that the attempt to throw discredit upon the mass of evidence brought forward by spiritists in support of their belief in their communion with supernatural beings, proceeds on an assumption, the admission of which would shake the foundations of historic certitude. We grant that certain phenomena and facts presented by Spiritualism, can admit of a natural explanation; but we hold that the general manifestation is inexplicable, except on superhuman grounds. The theory that occult laws of nature may operate in the production of spiritualistic phenomena is absurd; for physical law is something universal and open. We know enough of the properties of matter to fix the limit of its laws. By the very force of the word law, constant and harmonious action is implied. If the influences that operate in Spiritualism are simply natural laws as yet "undiscovered," why should they be confined to such a sphere and no other? Why have the spiritualists distanced our men of science? Science may explain table-turning, but it cannot account for the phenomena of intelligence and will which tables and other inanimate objects manifest.

But it is said imposture has been practiced in Spiritualism, on the admission of spiritists themselves. There have been spiritualists who have publicly declared that the whole system is a fraud, and that "mediums" are vulgar swindlers, engaged in shearing the simpletons that trust them. Then too, when brought to a strict test, Spiritism fails to work its vaunted wonders. The oracles become dumb. The spirits refuse to appear. These facts, alas, only indicate with greater clearness, the identity of modern Spiritualism with the paganism, or devil-worship of antiquity. Cheat, imposture, contradiction, and lie characterize every Satanic work. The power of the devil is, moreover, limited by and subject to the divine will, which allows its exercise only under certain circumstances. God would not permit the demon to work openly and unrestrainedly the prodigies witnessed by the spirit circle; for the generality of men could not or would not take pains to correct the deception, or inquire into its origin. As to the "re-

canters" of Spiritualism, it is clear that dealings with the other world are peculiarly liable to be counterfeited, and that mountebanks may avail themselves of this facility without in the least invalidating by their jugglery the main truth of the supernatural cause of Spiritism.

Another peculiar feature about Spiritualism, which its opponents have thought destructive of its claims to supernaturalism, is the trivial and unimportant nature of its early manifestations. The entire system, it is said, has been built on a few unimportant phenomena, by no means so elevated or portentous as to denote a supernatural origin. Thus the rise of Spiritualism dates in America from the "Rochester knockings," which disturbed the Fox family in 1848. Next followed noises, as if a number of bodies were violently hurled through the air, the throwing down of heavy weights, the violent disarrangement of furniture, &c. After these phenomena came the graver ones of personal obsession by spirits. Men and women, under seemingly mesmeric influence, would speak foreign languages of which, in their normal state, they knew nothing. After the "knockings," Fox and his family learned how to ask questions of the spirit by means of an alphabet. Miss Hardinge thus describes the discovery:

"Sentences were spelled out by which was learned the astounding fact that hosts of spirits, good and bad, high and low, could, under certain conditions not understood and impossible for mortals yet to comprehend, communicate with earth; that such communication was produced through the force of spiritual and human magnetism in chemical affinity; that the varieties of magnetism in different individuals afforded 'medium power' to some, and denied it to others; . . . that the spirits chiefly concerned in the inauguration of this telegraphy were philosophic and scientific minds, many of whom had made the study of electricity and other imponderables a specialty in their earth life; and prominent among them the name of Benjamin Franklin was frequently given. . . Numerous spirit friends of the family and those who joined in their investigations, gladdened the hearts of their astonished relatives by direct and unlooked-for tests of their presence. They came, spelling out their names, ages, and various tokens of identity correctly, and proclaiming the joyful tidings that they all 'still lived,' 'still loved,' and with the tenderness of human affection and the wisdom of a higher sphere of existence, watched over and guarded the beloved ones who had mourned them as dead, with all the gracious ministry of guardian angels. The spirits recommended the assembling of the friends of the family together in harmonious meetings, which have since obtained the name of 'spirit circles;' and at these the practice of animal magnetism to some of the parties present was suggested, as a means of evoking the phenomenon of clairvoyance."

A committee was appointed to examine into the cause of these strange revelations, but the investigation could find no natural cause for their existence. The superstition

spread from Rochester throughout the Middle and Eastern States, everywhere exciting the profoundest attention and most thorough discussion. Men of eminence in science and letters, among whom may be mentioned Bancroft, Bigelow, Bryant, Willis, and Brownson, subjected the phenomena to the most minute and searching scrutiny, testified to the absence of imposture, and gave their concurrent opinion that the manifestation resulted, clearly, from supernatural influences, clairvoyant and mesmeric powers being inadequate to produce them.

Following these startling revelations came "the coloring of water in closely-corked vials, left standing on a detached table, in sight of all; magnetic drawings and paintings, and spirit music." Spirit hands also appeared. "In 1853, in a sitting where David Home was present, the circle was breaking up, when the spirits present begged the members to remain and seat themselves around the table again. They were then asked how many hands were on the table? and as there were six persons still remaining, they answered 'Twelve.' The instant reply was, 'There are thirteen;' when at a vacant space on the table a *thirteenth* shadowy hand and arm were plainly visible. It had the appearance of silver, and was half luminous. The hand moved backward and forward, took up a bell and rang it, and was finally seized by the writer of the description, when it melted in his grasp."

This side of Spiritualism continued until about the year 1850, when the spirits from wonder-workers became the apostles of a new religion. The consideration of Spiritualism from a doctrinal or dogmatic view is reserved for another article. But it is clear that the system of signs and wonders which we have outlined was to be only preparatory to a system of belief and morals. The gradual increase in the importance and number of the phenomena is another illustration of Satan's mode of action, willingness and consent on the part of his confederates being indispensable to the continuance and extension of his work. A manifestation of his full power would only deter the original rappers from holding further communication with him; whilst the harmless amusement of "knocking" and "spelling out love messages from departed friends" would tempt further experiment. As it is, the character of the spiritualistic phenomena at the present hour has become so clearly supernatural, so manifestly diabolical, that few Protestants and fewer Catholics, at all acquainted with Spiritualism, question the infernal source from which it springs. Should any doubt remain as to the truth of the general statements made in this paper, it will, we think, be summarily dispelled by the analysis which we purpose giving in our next, of the teachings and tendencies of this modern mystery of iniquity.

J. O'C.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

Chapter I.

Welcome again, thou hoary-headed guest; welcome, with thy snowy mantle clasped tightly around thee, and thy brow wreathed with a chaplet of holly and mistletoe; welcome with thy cheerful face and kindly smile. Sad hearts have longed for thee, old friends stand ready to greet thee; the young rejoice, and the old feel young again. Many an aged head, long bent beneath the weight of care, rises gladly to welcome thee; many a wearied heart, long chilled and frozen by the world's coldness, warms again with the buoyancy of youth at thy approach. It is Christmas, and the bright-eyed child feels happier, yet knows not why; a vision of plum-pudding, mince pies, Santa Claus in all his mystery and Christmas gifts make his little heart dance with joy. It is Christmas, and the young maiden feels a glow of her childhood as she sees through the vista of holly "the mistletoe bough" and the Christmas tree; and there is a magic in the former that brings a summer smile into the fair face. It is Christmas, and the old man lifts up his head, and oh! what a vision comes to him. Childhood, boyhood, and manhood sweep over him in a dream; his dead mother's hand is once more upon his brow; the fair young girl he wooed, and won, and lost; the bright, glad children, that made his home a paradise; all stand round his Christmas hearth, their shadows making its darkness bright. Christmas, and oh! for the widows who last year were happy wives; oh! for the orphans last year fostered beneath a parent's fond care. Alas! for the weeping mother and the stricken father; there has arisen a cry in a distant land, and its echoes make mournful many a Christmas hearth. They who lately stood there in the pride and flush of manhood are gone to their last, long home. Christmas is a sunbeam sent from God to melt the cold hearts of men. Dear reader, if you are young, rejoice in this happy time; rejoice ere the world has destroyed the freshness and fairness of your life; sing the praises of the Babe of Bethlehem, join in the glorious carols that sound His praise. And ye who are aged and weary, rejoice; open your hearts; join even as when children you joined in singing "Glory be to God on high." Ah! as your lips utter the words, you remember how in your childhood you listened with loving wonder to the sweet old story of the Chaldean shepherds, of the bright star over the stable, of the three kings from the East, and of Jesus, the Godlike Babe, born for you on that cold Christmas night. And fancy shows you again, as it showed you then, the golden stars in the deep blue sky, earth wrapped in its white robe, and the shepherds keeping their watch by night. You can almost see the heavens open, and the angel of the Lord descending singing "Glory be to God on high." It shows you the poor stable, with Joseph and Mary and the little Babe, with its hands outstretched to you. And

oh! though you may have wandered from God, though you may have sunk deep in sin and misery, though the faith of your childhood may have been neglected and almost lost, those little hands are outstretched still, those loving, infant eyes are turned to you with the same sweet, patient smile. Can you refuse them? Ah! no; if there be a lingering love of God in your hearts, if there be one memory of your holy faith left, if there be one recollection of your sinless, happy childhood, go with loving contrition to the feet of God's minister, and there welcome to your hearts the Babe of Bethlehem. It was Christmas eve, and the world's mighty heart throbbed with fresh light and vigor; but nowhere was the glorious festival more warmly welcomed than in the mansion of Lord Trevor. Trevor Hall was situated in one of the northern counties of England, and a stately building it was. It had been first erected by Sir William de Trevor, who came over with the Conqueror, and when one had crumbled away with age, another was added. Almost every style of architecture was in consequence employed, and the result was a picturesque mixture of the modern with the olden times. Here an old gray tower, covered with ivy, recalled you to the age of the Crusaders, while a stately entrance, a long, broad flight of marble steps, a grand hall, supported by fancifully carved pillars, brought you down to Queen Elizabeth's time; and, again, the large, magnificently furnished drawing-rooms, the exquisite little boudoirs of the noble library, belonged to the nineteenth century. The park was famed for its graceful deer, its silvery lakes, and its noble, old oak trees, and the pleasure-grounds for their rich and varied mixture of fruit and flowers.

Nobly in times of war and persecution had the Trevors held their faith. Death, exile, torture, and disgrace had been their lot; but through all they had bravely battled, and it was with a thankful heart Lord Bernard Trevor saw the glorious faith once more rearing its head in Old England.

Trevor was not a large town, but most of the inhabitants were Catholics. Lord Trevor had built a beautiful little chapel, and had liberally endowed both church and school. Early in life Lord Trevor had married a noble Catholic lady, and for many years he had hoped and prayed for a son and heir.

Two daughters were born, and then came a boy, but scarcely had they rejoiced over his birth than they wept over his death. And thus the Ladies Winifred and Agnes became the sole heiresses of their father's noble name and vast fortune. The Lady Winifred was several years older than her sister. She was a beautiful girl. The nobility of her race spoke in every feature. You read it in the pale lofty brow; in the dark flashing eyes; in the chiselled features; in the small haughty lip; and in the graceful, though stately figure. She looked a high-born, high-bred lady —and such she was. Agnes was most unlike her sister, but quite as beautiful. One inherited the father's noble aristocratic bearing and features, the other her mother's delicate loveliness and grace. Oh that I had an inspired pen to tell you the glories of that Christmas-eve!

The snow lay deep upon the ground; it hung in thick fringes on the trees; it covered the clustering ivy; and it looked so fair and pure, one could almost wish it always there. It was a bright, clear, cold, frosty night; the moon shone under the golden stars buried in the deep blue sky. The moonbeams lay like gleams of silver on the snow; they sparkled in the icicles that drooped like diamonds from the branches and the eaves. But inside the mansion, oh! there was Christmas. Every room was decorated with evergreens, until the house seemed like a grand forest; the red berries peeped from the green holly; the mystic mistletoe twined with the laurestinus, and laurel and fir wreathed around the walls and picture-frames. It made one's heart glad to see those beautiful rooms.

One drawing-room was more profusely decorated than any other, for there stood the Christmas-tree. It was a fine fir tree, from the park, and most beautiful its dark green branches looked with the glittering tapers; the golden oranges, the purple grapes, and the gay streaming ribbons. Such treasures lay in that tree!—books, pictures, medals, jewels, toys, and costly rosaries. Everything that could be wished for was there; it seemed to have come from fairy-land, so brilliant and beautiful was that Christmas-tree. The door softly opened, and Lady Agnes gently entered the room. Looking cautiously around, and seeing no one, she advanced, and placed a bracelet of brilliants for her sister on the drooping branch.

Chapter II.

Dear reader, will you go back three years with me? When Winifred Trevor was only seventeen, she met Aubrey Howard, the only son of a noble and wealthy gentleman, whose country-seat was near Trevor Hall. The acquaintance soon ripened into love, and love increased, until it became something like worship.

Aubrey was equal to Winifred in birth, fortune, and education, and he had no doubt, when he applied to Trevor for permission to address her, but that he should obtain his consent. But, to his great surprise, and still greater grief, his proposals were mildly but firmly refused.

"But surely, Lord Trevor, you will tell me why? you will give me some reason? It is cruel and heartless to tell me only this."

"I *will* tell you, Aubrey. Believe me, I suffer as much pain as I inflict, for you are as dear to me as one of my own children; but Winifred is betrothed; she has been betrothed from her infancy."

"And to whom, my lord?" said Aubrey.

"To Sir Wilfred Denham. I and his father were most warmly attached to each other. When his son and my daughter were born, it became our dearest wish to see them united. You know Sir Wilfred's father died some time ago, and on his death-bed he made me solemnly renew my promise that, unless any great impediment arose, my child should become his son's wife. I cannot break a pledge made to the dead."

"But had you any right to make such a promise, my lord? Will it not be better broken than kept?"

"I cannot alter my decision, or recall my pledge. Does my daugh-

ter know of this application to me?"

"She does, my lord; she sanctioned it. She knows nothing of your promise."

"No; nor do I intend her to know it at present. I can trust to your honor, Aubrey, not to reveal what has passed between us?"

"I promise, my lord, but I do not renounce all hope of yet winning Lady Winifred's hand. She is my first and will be my only love, and it is only with life that I shall renounce hope."

A few more words passed, and Aubrey, when he left Lord Trevor's presence, sought Winifred.

He told her her father had rejected him, and told him to seek her no more; but, true to his word, he did not tell her of that to him fatal promise.

Lord Trevor sent for his daughter to his room, and quietly told her Aubrey had applied for permission to address her, but that he had not sanctioned the application.

"And the reason, papa?"

"I cannot at present explain, my child; your extreme youth is one great objection; but, Winifred, I lay my commands upon you to think no more of Aubrey as a lover or a husband. Your affections cannot be very deeply engaged. I think it more a childish fancy than anything else. I can trust you to obey me."

The fact was, Lord Trevor had an idea that girls never were well pleased at having husbands chosen for them; therefore he determined to say nothing at present to Winifred of Sir Wilfred, but to bring them together, and then see.

"That is neither right nor just," said Winifred to herself; "papa, doubtless, has a reason, but he ought, at least, to tell me what it is."

Dear reader, I would fain be spared the task of telling how Winifred and Aubrey tried to forget each other; how she prayed and wept, and how he pleaded. And then how gradually they thought less of the commands laid upon them. How they met by stealth in the park and in the wood. How, by degrees, that fatal sin of disobedience crept in, and then the love of God grew less fervent, the sacraments were less frequented, human love and human passion filled their hearts, and I could weep to tell you how they suffered for their sin.

Then the fatal time came when Aubrey was ordered with his regiment abroad to the war, and he would not leave Winifred until she had solemnly plighted her troth to him. Solemnly and sacredly she pledged her word to become his wife, and to wed none but him; and she added a promise of secrecy, at his request, until his return. God help a human heart given over to the guidance of human passion.

Six months only of the two years had passed when Christmas came, and found the noble and beautiful Lady Winifred a betrothed bride, but a disobedient child. And a short time before Christmas a letter was received from Sir Wilfred Denham, asking permission, on his return to England, to spend a few weeks at Trevor Hall.

Love and remorse alternately held Lady Winifred's heart. Love said, "There is none dearer to you than Aubrey, and you are more precious to him than life; you have done right in giving him that

promise." But remorse said "You, the child of a noble race, the child of a trusting father; you have sullied that name, and betrayed that trust by an act of disobedience."

People wondered that the gay, laughing Lady Winifred had become captious and haughty; that the quick, hasty reply came, instead of the kind, loving word. Her interest in the well-being of others was nearly gone; she mused over her unfortunate love and her disobedience, until her own trials so filled her heart that there was no room for the griefs and woes of her fellow-creatures.

"Winifred," said Lord Trevor, one morning, three weeks before Christmas, "I wish to speak to you here; sit down, my child. I have received a letter to-day from Sir Wilfred Denham. You do not know him. He is the son of a dear old friend of mine. He has been abroad from his childhood, and he is coming to spend the Christmas vacation with us."

"Well, papa, dear, I shall be glad to see any friend of yours."

"I had better tell her at once," thought Lord Trevor; "she must know soon." He continued:

"You must do your best to entertain him. I think it best to tell you that Sir Wilfred's chief object in coming here is to see yourself."

"To see me, papa! How can that be? I do not know him; I have never seen him."

"But he has heard of you, Winnie, dear."

"Do you wish me to understand, papa, that Sir Wilfred is coming here as my lover?"

"I do, Winifred."

"Then, papa, I tell you at once it is useless; I can never receive him as such."

"And why not, Winifred?"

"I cannot and will not, papa," and the large, dark eyes flashed, and the pale cheek flushed as she rose proudly, and stood erect and haughty before Lord Trevor.

"But, Winnie, this is nonsense," said Lord Trevor, laying his hand caressingly on her head. "You cannot dislike a man you have never seen. Tell me, at least, why you object to receive Sir Wilfred."

"I *cannot* tell you, papa."

"I will not insult you, Lady Winifred, by supposing—by supposing—that other proposals I have forbidden you even to think of, have anything to do with this."

Winifred did not answer. This allusion to Aubrey blanched her cheek and lip, and left her pale as death; but with a stronger will to resist for his dear sake.

"I am awaiting your answer, Lady Winifred," continued Lord Trevor.

"I have none to give, papa, except that I never can and never will receive Sir Wilfred as my lover. Oh, father," she added, with a burst of passionate tears, "do not look so sternly on me."

"You can retire, Lady Winifred; only remember, my word is pledged that you shall become Sir Wilfred Denham's wife, and I expect you to obey me and my commands."

"I never will," said Winifred, half aloud, as she haughtily left the room. Yet her good angel had been with her, and, as she stood there with flashing eyes, and the crimson flush of anger burning on her cheek and brow, he had whispered, "Confess all now." But

pride and disobedience closed her ears, and the angel's soft whisper was not heard.

She had changed once; from a laughing, loving girl, she had become a haughty, reserved woman; and she changed again. The traces of the good angel became fainter; disobedience, once so fatally indulged, became habitual. She was moody and silent; the deep grief locked in her own heart oppressed her; she longed to throw herself on her mother's bosom, or at her father's feet, and confess all.

With bitter grief did those loving parents behold day by day their unhappy child: that some great sorrow embittered her they plainly saw, but to all kind entreaties, to all loving words, there was the same haughty, indifferent answer.

The evening before Christmas eve, as Winifred was retiring to rest, Lady Trevor kissed her fondly, and said, "Winnie, darling, are you not going to confession tomorrow?"

There was a softening for a moment of the still proud face, and a milder light in the dark eyes; it was but for a moment, and her mother's kiss had called it. It was not returned, and she answered coldly, "I think not, mamma."

She had never been since Aubrey left.

"Oh, Winnie! and it is Christmas eve."

"I know it, mamma;" and then came to Winifred's mind a picture of last Christmas eve, before the love of her young heart was crushed, and her cup of happiness turned into a poisoned chalice. Then she was truthful, happy, loved, and loving; now she stood before her noble, gentle mother, with a dark cloud over her head and heart. Secretly pledged against her father's wishes and commands, her soul was stained by a crime of disobedience; her lips sealed by a vow of silence; her mind so swayed by love and remorse that it wellnigh lost its balance. Still there arose no cry of grief or pain from that proud, stricken heart.

"Winifred, my child," and her mother's arm was thrown around her, "tell me why you are so changed; have you a secret from me? Is your fancied dislike to Sir Wilfred so great; or do you prefer another? Tell me, darling, I am your truest and best friend."

The white lips almost convulsively moved, but she replied, "I have nothing to tell, mamma."

"Oh, Winnie, my darling child, —nay, do not turn from me; do not look so despairing; make me your friend and *confidante*. For many long weeks you have neglected me; the morning and evening kiss you gave me when a child has been forgotten; do you think you give your mother's heart no pain by this perverse, strange conduct?"

The good angel whispered again, and for a moment there was a strong impulse to throw herself into her mother's arms, and to sob out there her love, her promise, and her misery. But there came a backward vision of the old elm-tree in the park,—of the dark, earnest, loving eyes bent upon her,—of two hands clasping her own in the pale moonlight; then she gave that pledge,—the impulse was conquered, and the strong spirit, bruised though not broken, rose up within her.

She made no answer, and Lady Trevor mournfully drew her arms from around her, and left her with a sigh.

That same night, long after all in the mansion were asleep, Winifred lay awake, watching through the weary hours. Suddenly she saw her room-door softly opened, and Lady Trevor entered. Feigning sleep, Winifred closed her eyes, and did not open them or move even when her mother passed the night-lamp over her face. Thinking her buried in a deep slumber, Lady Trevor knelt by her side. One of her hands lay carelessly thrown over her head: Lady Trevor took it and covered it with kisses and tears. Hot, bitter tears fell on it, and, thinking she still slept, her mother's hand was passed lovingly over her; how it lingered fondly among the rich, raven tresses that flowed around, and gently still her mother's lips were pressed upon her brow. And then, as though the strength within her gave way, Lady Trevor hid her face in her hands and wept bitterly.

"My darling one, my precious one, gone from me in heart and soul, my first-born, my loving, gentle Winnie." And from her soul to heaven there went such a prayer as only a mother's lips can frame.

Oh! Catholic mother, whose eyes are now glancing over my page, has this ever been your lot? Have you ever seen your dearest and fairest going astray, without power to help and guide her? Have you ever seen the little one whose steps you tended, whose golden curls have been so oftened pillowed on your bosom, grown into the cold, careless, disobedient child? Have you ever seen the little head whose aching you have soothed for many a weary hour, tossed in disdain or pride at your remonstrance or control? Have you ever seen the little lips you first taught to speak wreathe themselves into a haughty smile at your advice and admonitions? Have you seen the child who has cost you so much care and anxiety, and to whom you so fondly looked in your declining years for comfort and for love, have you seen her go astray from you, neglect you, repay your devotion with indifference, your love with contempt, and your advice with ridicule? Oh! then you know the sharpest pain this world has. Pity this poor mother in her midnight visit to her beautiful but rebellious child.

And oh! my young Catholic sister, if perchance these words should touch your heart, if an unkind word has passed your lips, or an unkind thought dwelt in your mind,—if you are walking in a path from which a mother's hand would fain turn you aside, oh! pause and think, and remember the time will come when God will take that mother from you, and how you will then regret every disobedient, disrespectful word or thought.

The hot tears still lay wet upon the Lady Winifred's hand, the loving kiss still burned upon her brow, when her mother rose, and with a lingering look of sadness and of love, left the room. When the last echo of her footsteps had died away, when the unhappy girl was once more alone, she sprang up and threw back the long hair from her fevered brow; she drew her

shawl around her, and walked to the window, but not even the frost on the cold panes could cool her hot and flushed face.

The world lay before her, so calm and pure, and she was so tossed with passion and grief; the heavy eyes were raised to the clear sky, where shone with their holy light the golden stars; the moonbeams silvered the trees in the parks; she could see the old elm where she had last stood with Aubrey; she looked upon her hand, still wet with her mother's tears, and she turned with a wearied sigh from the window, saying, "Oh, that I had never seen him, or had never broken my father's trust!"

Chapter III.

Christmas eve! Christmas eve! How the cry gladdens every one, and pours into our heart a rich tide of love, and joy, and pleasure. There is rest for the weary, and joy for the poor,—the hard-working, toiling poor, God's own people. Have you never noticed, dear reader, how the poor love Christmas? No matter how wretched the house, or how dirty the window, you will always see a few pieces of holly fixed in the sometimes broken panes.

We left Christmas eve in Trevor Hall, and the Lady Agnes had just fastened upon the Christmas-tree a bracelet for her sister. Then hastening to the dressing-room, she found Lady Winifred preparing for the drawing-room. It was a pretty scene, that nicely furnished dressing-room, with its bright lights and cheerful fire, and the two fair young sisters.

"Are you nearly dressed, Winnie, darling? I hear a great stir in the hall. I think Sir Wilfred Denham has arrived; the drawing-room is half full of guests. You cannot think how the Christmas-tree is admired. Here is mamma."

"Are you ready, my children?" said Lady Trevor.

"Yes, mamma," replied Agnes, "only just one moment longer. Clotilde, fasten this spray better in my hair, and arrange this lace. That will do. Now, mamma, shall we please papa? He said he should expect a *recherche* toilet. We do not look much like sisters, though, do we?" And Lady Agnes threw her arm around her stately sister, and stood with a mischievous, though half-deferential smile before Lady Trevor.

The mother's fond heart warmed as she gazed upon her two lovely children. A contrast they were even in their very beauty. A rich black velvet dress revealed Winifred's white shoulders and arms, and made them look doubly fair; it fell around her, too, in such graceful folds. The white lace waved like a soft cloud, and the glossy black tresses were interwoven with soft gleaming pearls. The fever flush burned on her cheek, and lit her dark flashing eyes, and made her look more beautiful than ever. For an aristocratic queenly girl, Lady Winifred would have stood foremost amongst the most noble. Lady Agnes wore a dress of pale blue satin, the rich laces making the fair arms and neck more than ever fair. A wreath of starry jessamine and silver leaves was fastened around the golden curls that fell in such luxuriant profusion. The

deep blue eyes were fairly dancing with joy, and Lady Trevor smiled as she gazed upon her fairy child. Agnes and her sister reminded you—one of a graceful delicate lily, the other of a beautiful queenly rose.

"We await your decision, mamma; we are quite ready to go."

"Your papa wishes to introduce you to Sir Wilfred before you go into the drawing-room. I will let him know you are waiting for him."

"Now, papa," said Lady Agnes, as Lord Trevor appeared, "do not, please, detain us long; I am impatient to go into the drawing-room."

Lord Trevor looked very proud of his two peerless daughters, as he presented them to Sir Wilfred. A kindly smile of welcome greeting played around the Lady Agnes's lips, as she placed her hand in his, but to Winifred's mind there arose the debasing thought, "And they would have me renounce Aubrey for him." Her words were as cold as her looks, and poor Sir Wilfred was almost frozen. They adjourned to the drawing-room; the tapers on the tree were lit, and an admiring group surrounded it.

Sir Wilfred approached Winifred, saying, "I must really congratulate your ladyship upon your exquisite taste; the tree is most beautifully decorated."

"I am glad you admire it," was Winifred's indifferent reply.

"I do indeed; I consider a Christmas-tree one of the most pleasing of all Christmas customs."

"I quite agree with you."

Sir Wilfred waited some further reply, but none came. I must try something else, thought he.

"I did so much admire the scenery as I rode up to the hall; I never saw anything look more beautiful than the old trees in the park, covered with snow; I really think winter desolation is preferable to summer glory."

"We admire each season in its turn; each has its own charm."

Sir Wilfred sighed; *he* could not find a sunbeam to melt the snow.

"Do you hear much of the war?" he began again.

Ah, that was a dangerous topic; only you did not know it.

"Not very much," she replied.

"Did you know Aubrey Howard? His father's place is somewhere near here, I think; he went out with his regiment some time since?"

Fortunately, he did not look at her, or he would have seen the rich crimson gone, and the fair face deadly pale. Her hands clasped each other, and her lips quivered, though she could not speak.

"His regiment greatly distinguished themselves, I hear?"

"And he?" she said, in a low, quiet voice, though her eyes dilated with a wild fire.

"He is promoted, and covered with military honors."

The despairing, defiant look passed from her face, it was so strange to hear his name again, and from such a source. She looked up for the first time to her companion. He was not a handsome man, but there was something noble and candid in his face: he looked what he really was, frank, affectionate, and simple-hearted. His eyes were fixed upon Lady Agnes, whose sunny face was fairly glowing with smiles and laughter.

"I never saw any one so beauti-

ful as your sister," he said, and then blushed at his own simplicity.

Winifred smiled; she thought it such a novel way of making love to herself, and the smile made her look so radiant that Lord Trevor crossed the room to join her. He thought Sir Wilfred was making wonderful progress; he little knew that the light upon that beautiful face was caused by hearing of Aubrey's success, and her sister's praise. After the presents were distributed from the tree, the yule log was brought in, and they sat round the hearth. Lord Trevor read a Christmas legend, and another gentleman told a Christmas story of a haunted house: so they watched the yule log burn, until they heard the Christmas waits outside. And then there was a hush in the room, as the sweet old Christmas carols floated on the air, and found their way into every heart, and made music there. Then rang out in the clear, cold, frosty air, the bell for midnight Mass. "Christ is born," it seemed to say; "come and adore him."

The distance was so short from the hall to the church, and the night so beautiful, the whole party determined to walk. Sir Wilfred, whose eyes had rarely left Lady Agnes's face, escorted her and Lady Trevor. Their road lay through the broad lawn, where the snow lay thick upon the ground, and through a short path in the woods, where it hung upon the leafless trees. The whole world looked white and sparkling as the moonbeams fell upon the snow; the moon and stars shone brightly, and the earth seemed full of gladness and joy. The church door stood open, as though inviting one to enter and worship the newborn babe.

And oh, how beautiful it looked! how the holly and fir were twined in great masses round the pictures and the cross, and how the laurel hung in great arches over the ceiling and the halls. No white was seen; all was green, bright, fresh green. The altar, with its green wreaths, its Christmas roses, and its bright tapers, looked most glorious; but the most beautiful thing of all was the crib. In a small grove of fir this crib was placed, and it held Joseph and Mary with the infant Jesus. True to nature was the blue sky, the white earth, the few leafless trees, the poor stable, with the manger and the ox. True to life was the holy Saint Joseph, with his kind, saintly face and venerable figure; truer still was our dear Lady in all the glory of her beauty, so meek, so humble, and yet so dignified and calm; but truest yet was that dear Babe of Bethlehem, with his loving smile, his tender eyes, and his outstretched hands. It must be a heart of iron that could refuse homage there.

Oh that midnight mass with its pealing music, its fragrant incense, and its thousand lights! *Gloria in excelsis* sang the choir, and the angels caught up the cry, and *Gloria* rang through earth and air, and heaven. *Gloria* rose from thousands of human hearts, and lingered with a sweet sound on loving lips. *Gloria* rose from the bright angels, from the tuning seraphim, and round God's holy throne the sounds floated like a rose cloud resting on gold; and then, oh, reader! that hymn so dear to Catholic hearts, rang throughout the world,

the dear old *Adeste.* Ah! reader, you heard that hymn when you were a little child, pure and sinless, as one of the sweet angels joining in it! you hear it now when you are old and worn in the world's ways, and it brings to you a heart full of good and holy recollections, so full of the freshness of your youth, that you can only bow your head and weep.

You may have, perhaps, kept your childish, loving faith as a precious jewel; you may have followed its dictates, and lived by its rules; if so, rejoice, and join with a thankful heart in that sweet music. You may have lost, neglected, or spurned your faith; you have believed, but not practiced it; you may have served God with cold, worldly heart: oh! if so, as the thought of your happy childhood comes back by all the beautiful memories, kneeling before that Christmas altar give your heart and soul again to God.

Ah, Lady Winifred, your father's anxious brow, your mother's hot tears, your sister's loving prayers, had not power to move you; they had but bound its icy chains faster; but as the sweet old chant came pealing on her ears, as she knelt before that humble altar, as she watched the tender mother and the loving babe, her proud heart softened, and when the last *Venite adorimus* was sung, in a low melodious thrilling voice, she knelt, and the icy fountains gave way at last. Disobedience, pride, and love melted. There was a longing for the old happy peace of her girlhood, for a clear conscience, and a quiet heart. "*Sanctus, sanctus,*" and *Sanctus* sang the angels, and with a glorious burst of melody rang out the *Hosanna.* Then the church was hushed, the incense rose in fragrant clouds over the altar until the tapers shone through its mist like stars. Lower and lower the people bend, warmer and more loving each heart grows, the mystery of all mysteries is accomplished, and then softly floating round like the echo of a distant band of angels, the solemn *Agnus Dei* fills every heart. And then that glorious midnight Mass was ended; but still the Lady Winifred knelt and wept. They waited, but she did not move until her sister gently reminded her Lord Trevor was standing awaiting her. With her veil tightly drawn, she left the church. Sir Wilfred again joined Lady Trevor and Agnes. Winifred gently touched her father's arm, and said:

"Papa, may I speak to you now, before we enter the hall?"

"Yes, Winnie; but will you not wait? We shall be at home in one minute."

"Oh! papa, let me tell you now, while my heart is still full of that beautiful Mass, and I feel humble and contrite. Turn just down this path, I will not keep you long; do not hate me—do not despise me—when I confess what I have done."

"Hate you, Winifred! You are still my child, no matter what you may have done."

"Bless you, papa, for saying that; but I have betrayed your trust, broken my word, disobeyed your commands. I have deceived you, and while you thought me good and true, I have been false and wicked."

Her voice trembled and her lips quivered, but still she went bravely

on. "Papa, I have met Aubrey Howard, unknown to you, and unknown to any one. I have met him, and plighted my faith to him. I vowed to become his wife, and promised never to reveal until he returned what I have told you. Now, papa," and the once proud figure drooped, and bent before him, "tell me the worst, do you not hate me?"

"My poor child, my darling Winifred, how you have suffered," Lord Trevor said, his eyes filled with tears; the sight of that pale suffering face disarmed his anger.

"I have suffered, papa. I have longed all day for night to come, that I might be alone, for I felt your presence kill me, and all night I have longed for day, that I might lose my own thoughts. I wished to tell you, but I dare not; what shall I do?"

"Come home now, Winifred. God bless you that you have told me this. Why you are as white as the snow almost; let us hurry home."

They did, Lord Trevor supporting Winifred, who still trembled violently.

"But, papa, you have not told me yet what I must do."

"Wait patiently, my child, leave all to God; let His will guide you, and pray that you may know it."

They entered the hall, but Lady Winifred did not again join the Christmas party.

"Kiss me, and bless me, father, before I leave you; and, oh! say that you forgive me. I will never disobey you again, my kind, good papa; I will do all you wish."

When Winifred was in her own room, Lady Trevor came to her at her request, and then kneeling at that dear mother's feet, her face buried in her hands, she confessed her fault.

Again that evening Lady Trevor visited her child, but this time it was to assure her once more of her love and sympathy.

There was peace in Winifred's heart that night. True, there was a sorrowful yearning love, but there was no deceit, no disobedience; all was confessed and forgiven.

On Christmas-day, long before the inmates of the mansion were aroused, Winifred was kneeling again before the altar, preparing for confession. There was an early Mass at eight, and Lord and Lady Trevor, with most of their guests, attended, and knelt together before God's holy altar, and received with loving hearts the Babe of Bethlehem. And oh! if you could have been in the breakfast-room where they all assembled, and have heard the Christmas congratulations, you would never have forgotten the scene.

"A Merry Christmas" went all round, and Christmas gifts were exchanged, then came the grand High Mass and the Christmas dinner. Roast beef and turkeys led the dance; plum-puddings and mince-pies followed; grapes and pears figured, as they always do, largely. Christmas afternoon was given to singing and music; and after Vespers and Benediction came Christmas games and stories.

Right good English cheer, and good Christmas in good old English style, was kept there; and amidst all, Lady Agnes danced and sang, her sunny face brightening every room she entered, and con-

stant as her shadow followed Sir Wilfred.

Chapter IV.

I must introduce you, dear reader, formally, to Sir Wilfred's apartment at Trevor Hall. It was a fine large room hung round with rich tapestry and silk hangings. A cheerful fire blazed on the hearth, and a bright lamp burned on the table. An easy chair stood before the fire, and in this chair sat the good Sir Wilfred. It wanted an hour until dinner, and he had retired to think, solely because it was impossible for him to think in any other room in the house, for Lady Agnes was sure to come dancing in like a sunbeam; and then, no matter how many ideas he had collected, they were all scattered to the winds, and he had to begin again only to lose them once more. Sir Wilfred's thoughts then arranged in proper order,—was something like the following: in fact, his soliloquy was made partly aloud:

"Well—the thing is plain enough—I am in love with the wrong lady. Here I am, pledged by two fathers to marry Lady Winifred, and she very plainly does not care much for me; while that glorious Agnes, with her bright eyes and saucy smile, is a thousand times kinder. Lady Winifred is too grand for me; altogether too much in the magnificent style. Agnes is a sunbeam. I wonder if those two fathers mentioned any name in the particulars, because if they only said 'my son' and 'my daughter,' I may as well be happy with Agnes as miserable with Winifred. She is a splendid girl, though; I will try."

Lord Trevor looked rather surprised when Sir Wilfred asked, the same evening, for a private interview; and he was still more surprised, on going to the library, where he had requested Sir Wilfred to attend, to meet the Lady Agnes trying to escape before he reached the door; and when he caught her hands, to see how she blushed and stammered and ran away.

His surprise reached a climax when he heard from Sir Wilfred a declaration of his love for Agnes, and his conviction that he and Lady Winifred were dissimilar in every way. "I shall love her dearly as a sister, I am sure, my lord," was the conclusion of a long and eloquent speech. Nothing availed Lord Trevor but to give his consent, which he ultimately did, but not without a deal of sage reflection on the caprices of the sex in general and of his own two daughters in particular.

And then, dear reader, when the war was over, Aubrey returned home so honored, and fêted, and caressed, that Lord Trevor, being obliged to honor him as one of the heroes of the day, invited him to the hall. The next Christmas saw a double wedding at Trevor. Sir Wilfred looked the picture of bliss with his bride, the saucy Lady Agnes; and Aubrey, whose handsome, manly face, looked darker with the sun of a warmer clime, thought nothing so peerlessly beautiful as his gentle, faithful Winnie, had ever been seen before. From Lady Winifred's heart there ascended, night and day, a cry of thanksgiving that she had been spared some of the consequences of disobedience.

And so, dear reader, amidst a shower of bride-cake, wedding favors, and orange-blossoms, I take my leave, wishing you with all my heart a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

OUR LADY OF THE CHAIR.

BY ELEANOR C. DONNELLY.

MADONNA DELLA SEDIA! it hangs upon my wall,
Where the sunshine makes a glory and the rippling moonbeams crawl;
Where the early morning bathes it in its pure and pearly light,
And the falling shadows veil it at the gloaming from my sight.

A *basso relievo* after Raffaele's design—
With a world of mystic loveliness in every curve and line,
As I sit beneath it writing at my desk, mine eyes *will* stray
From the paper to the picture, a hundred times a day.

The Virgin Mother sitteth in her carven chair antique,
With her arms about the Infant, and the oval of her cheek
Pressed lightly on the silken curls, from which the Child's clear eyes,
Full of a fearless dignity, look out in kingly wise.

Monarch, and yet a Baby, with its dimpled feet upcurled,
Half-hiding in its Mother's breast the hands that rule the world;
As in the awful bosom of the sunny main concealed,
Rare wrecks of golden treasure to the divers are revealed,—
So those wondrous eyes of Jesus in their shadowless expanse,
Reveal a golden mystery to ev'ry reverent glance.

And as the glory of the stars melt dimly thro' the night,
When the radiant moon is flooding all the heavens with her light,—
So in the monlight lustre of the Mother's peerless mien,
The starry-eyed St. John at first (tho' near her) is unseen.

One foot upon Our Lady's stool,—one arm upon her knee,—
Close nestling to the Infant Christ, the son of Zachary,
The lovely little Baptist, in his cloak of camel-hair,
Is far too fair a vision to be long forgotten there.

One might suppose Elizabeth had sent her chosen boy,
(Drawn by the Holy Spirit with a strange, ascetic joy,)
To bid farewell to Mary, beg the blessing of her Child,
Ere he hid himself, young hermit, in the desert lone and wild.

And gazing, wrapt and prayerful, on that earthly trinity—
(The fairest out of heaven),—one almost fears to see
The curtain by the pillar gently shaken and withdrawn,
And the wistful face of John,—a moment lingering,—then—gone.

O mighty privilege of love! which faith can ne'er forget,
To be the kinsman of Our Lord—Our Lady's chosen pet!
O mightier sacrifice of love! which having once beheld,
Embraced and touched the living Christ, could leave Him when He willed.

Forsake the little sacred room (our tabernacle's type),
Whence Joseph's shop looked out upon the orchard full and ripe?
Resign the Mother in her chair,—the Babe upon her knees?
Who but the new Elias could have done such things as these?

O Angel of the Desert! in sweet pity teach me how
To make *my* mansion ready for so pure a guest as thou!
How to build upon my wretched heart a chair, a throne divine,
Where Mary and her Son may sit and govern me and mine!

And 't will be the joy of worship while they steadily control
All the senses of my body,—all the powers of my soul,—
To know that for the future,—health or sickness, joy or care,
The heart's best hopes are anchored in Our Lady of the Chair!

Presentation of Our Lady, 1871.

THE ONCE FAMOUS JAIME FERRER, THE LAPIDARY OF BURGOS AND COLUMBUS.

BY J. J. BARRY, M.D.

The space at my disposal in my De Lorgue's Life of Columbus permitting me only to glance at what was said of the famous lapidary of Burgos, I beg leave to reproduce the whole article here, where, for future reference, it will be better preserved than if consigned to the columns of a secular journal, and for the following reasons:

First, because the views of the discovery of the New World, uttered by this illustrious personage, are too important, too remarkable, not to be rescued from the comparative oblivion to which ingratitude and malevolence would doom them.

Secondly, because the notices of this man in Irving's, as well as in

my De Lorgue's Columbus (he is scarcely noticed at all in any other English work), are too meagre for the honorable mention he merits in historic literature.

Thirdly and chiefly, because at a time when the beatification of Columbus is largely discussed, the opinions entertained of him, and of the origin and realization of his immortal discovery, by such a man as the noted lapidary of Burgos, a contemporary, as well as an enlightened judge in such a case, must be peculiarly interesting to all classes of readers, whether Catholic or non-Catholic. With these preliminaries we will now hasten to our subject.

After mentioning the anxiety and trouble Queen Isabella had about the embarkation for Flanders of her recently married daughter, and the preparations she had immediately after to make for the becoming reception of Princess Margaret, the consort of her son Don Juan, De Lorgues goes on to say:

"In the midst of these occupations and cares, Columbus could not becomingly press the Queen to order immediate preparations for a third voyage of discoveries. It became necessary for him, as at the time of his first expedition, to wait in silence and restrain his legitimate impatience. During the forced inaction of his sojourn, the Admiral could not fail in promptly entering into intimate personal intercourse with a man of that city who had already become, at the request of Isabella, his correspondent before he had left Hispaniola, but whom he yet knew only by character."

This man, whom the Queen was in the habit of inviting to court, and whom the Grand Cardinal of Spain honored with his marked friendship, was a merchant who traded in jewels, and who, besides branch houses in several places, had a magnificent store in Burgos. He was named Jaime Ferrer. His relations with distinguished personages in many countries, his ready access everywhere, his modesty mingled with becoming assurance, and his dignified bearing towards all classes, prove that, besides his personal merit, he was of gentle descent, and that he prided himself on his relationship to his namesake, Jaime Ferrer, the distinguished cosmographer of former times. If this jewel merchant had not been the most respectable and ablest of lapidaries, he would still attract marked notice as a close observer, a traveller, a linguist, a mathematician, an astronomer, a cosmographer, a metallurgist, a scholar, a philosopher, a poet, and almost a theologian. We may also add that he was an independent thinker in the Catholic acceptation of the term.

Jaime Ferrer, hitherto shamefully ignored by the biographers of Columbus, presented in comparison with great lords and high political dignitaries, one of the most remarkable individualities of that day in Spain. Often by the requirements of his business he went to Genoa, to Venice, to seaports in the Levant, to Egypt, to Palestine, and to Syria, frequenting the bazaars of Cairo, of Damascus, of Aleppo, and of Bagdad, trading with Arabian merchants who had come in caravans from Persia or from Korassan, and with others who had come by the Indian Ocean by

way of Mecca. He had acquired notions more precise and extensive respecting the continent of Asia than all other geographers were possessed of. He knew, for instance, that at that time, in the Indies, where no modern missionary had as yet penetrated, there existed Christians, descendants of those who had been evangelized by the Apostle St. Thomas, fourteen hundred years before that time, and that his body would be found there gloriously preserved. And our first missionaries, in fact, found in India, Christians whom they designated by the name of Christians of St. Thomas.

While seeking for gems, emeralds, topazes, and sapphires, the noble lapidary did not confine his inquiries or hopes to precious jewel caskets, or to his coffers of sequins or of ducats. He did not restrict himself to the purely theoretic parts of the sciences. His spiritual tastes and affinities, as much as his love for the Italian language, rendered him the interpreter of the religious thoughts of Dante. From the works of the taciturn exile of Florence, he collected Catholic doctrines veiled under the metaphors or allegories of the poet, and composed a work entitled *Sentencias catolicas del divi poeta Danté*, Catholic sentences of the divine poet Dante,—a work which has now become very rare. It was printed in Barcelona in 1545.

Jaime Ferrer having trafficked with Mahometans, with Jews, with schismatic Greeks, with semi-idolatrous Persians, with Tartars, with Ethiopians, and with Hindoos, had comprehended the unutterable superiority of Catholicity over all other religious doctrines. He had known well the geography of the whole earth, as far as the teachings and inter-communications of that period permitted, and studied deeply the history of the human race. In truth, the lapidary of Burgos belonged by anticipation to the school of Bossuet, of De Maistre, and of Dentura de Raulica. The pages that have remained to us from his pen would not have been discreditable to either of these illustrious personages. An elevation of thought commensurate with such varied knowledge and acquirements could not remain unnoticed. The episcopate of Spain esteemed very highly this lapidary, whom the Grand Chancellor of Castile honored with his friendship, and in whom all cosmographers recognized a master.

The varied knowledge of Jaimie Ferrer enabled him to appreciate better than all others had done, the sublime grandeur of Christopher Columbus, and to recognize his providential destiny. Knowing the imperfect state of the nautical science of that period, the uncertainty of geography, the impotency of the compass for such a work, he knew how little the resources of science had served him in his enterprise. He loudly declared the discovery rather a divine than a human affair, "mas divina que humana perigrinacion." Nevertheless his unobtrusiveness and modesty would, perhaps, have prevented him from entering into personal relation with the Viceroy of the Indies, if the thoughtful and ingenious Isabella had not given him orders to do so under the appearance of a desire. Having seen the similitude and

affinity of these two intelligences, she took peculiar pleasure in serving as a kind of connecting link between them.

It will be remembered that at the time of the reclamations of Portugal against the papal line of demarkation, the Grand Cardinal of Spain pressed his friend, Jaime Ferrer, to come to Barcelona with his charts and mathematical instruments. More than a year afterwards, notwithstanding the treaty of Fordesillas, the contest not being terminated, the lapidary wrote, in January, 1495, to the Queen, giving his opinion about the geographical considerations calculated to smooth the way for an adjustment of the matters at issue. The Queen wrote from Madrid to the illustrious lapidary, thanking him for his communication, which she held as a service rendered to the state, and inviting him to come to court in the month of May following.

In his letter to the Queen, the lapidary, speaking of Christopher Columbus, says: "I believe that in its high and mysterious designs, Divine Providence has chosen him as its mandatory for this work, which seems to me but an introduction and a preparation for things of which this same Divine Providence reserves to itself the disclosure for its own glory, and the salvation and happiness of the world." (*Coleccion diplomatica doc.*, No. lxviii.)

Ferrer received from the Queen the welcome he merited. The title of *Don* seems to have been accorded to him on this occasion. He was even honorably appointed, in quality of carver, *Trinchante*, in the household of the Prince Royal, the infant Don Juan. When Don Jaime Ferrer had the honor of expressing orally his ideas to the Queen, she desired him to submit them to the great Admiral of the ocean. In his mansion at Burgos, our Catholic thinker managed to have a secluded retreat for his studies, and on the 5th of August, 1495, he took up his pen.

Penetrated with profound respect for Columbus, he did not address his communication to him in the ordinary terms of an official correspondence, as he would have done to any other Viceroy of the Indies. He wrote to him as the revealer of the globe, with sentiments of respectful submission and of Christian liberty.

This letter, which it pains us not to be able to reproduce in its entirety, with its native grandeur, its unlooked for aperceptions, its style of a biblical simplicity; this letter proves once more that since the days of Solomon nothing is new under the sun for human comprehension; and that, in fact, "men of genius are always contemporaries with each other." One would think that the lapidary of Burgos had taken up his pen after having read the DISCOURS SUR L'HISTOIRE UNIVERSELLE two centuries before the time of Bossuet.

After giving in some lines a summary of the civilization called heroic, of the epochs of Saturn and of Hercules, the consequences of the conquest of Alexander the Great, and of those of Julius Cæsar, who, introducing among peoples the principles of law and of morality, in the train of the Roman eagles, unconsciously thus prepared the way for the good news, Jaime Ferrer

shows the Redeemer sending his apostles to the four quarters of the globe, distributing among them the spiritual conquest of the world. He recalls the sufferings, the tribulations, the hunger, the thirst, the persecutions which are destined for these men as their earthly recompense, and he recalls these words of infinite goodness to his friends: *Qui vult venire post me, tollat crucem suam et sequatur me*,—Let him that will be with me take up his cross and follow me.

The posthumous confidant of Dante declares to the revealer of the globe that he contemplates in that which he is effecting a great design from on high.

"Divine and infallible Providence," says he, "sent the great Thomas from the West to the East, to promulgate in the Indies our holy and Catholic religion; and you, Signor, he sends in an opposite direction, from the East to the West, in order that, by the divine will, you should come to reach the East, the extreme parts of Upper India, that the people who have not heard Thomas may know the law of salvation, and that the words of the prophet may be accomplished: Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: *In omnim terram exivit sonus eorum.*

"I do not think I err, Signor, in saying, that you fulfil the office of an Apostle, of an Ambassador of God, sent by divine appointment to make known His holy name to countries where it yet remains unknown. It would not have been unbecoming in propriety, dignity, or importance that a Pope or a Cardinal had taken in those countries a part in your glorious labors, but the necessity of attending to other weighty and important matters retains the Holy Father and the Cardinals, and prevents them from pursuing such a path. Still it is very certain, Signor, that in view of an object similar to yours, the Prince of the apostolic militia came to Rome, and that his collaborators, those vessels of election, went throughout the wide world, emaciated, harassed, their sandals worn out, and their tunics threadbare, enfeebled by privations, by fatigue, by dangers, and by travelling, during which they often eat of the bread of bitterness."

Don Jaime also declares to Columbus that *he* also ought to expect for himself sufferings and trials, those marks of election and of celestial predilection.

His Catholic frankness, his rectitude of intention, emboldened the lapidary to the point of giving a pious counsel to the Ambassador of God, and to put him on his guard against human infirmity. He says to him that after these great things, when peradventure he will review in his mind the results of his glorious ministry, he will undoubtedly have, like the great prophet, to exclaim from the depths of his heart: "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*,"—Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to thy name give glory. This courageous recommendation of humility appears nothing less than a revelation of the lapidary's soul; we see in this instance the admirable Christian addressing himself to another Christian he admires.

Don Jaime Ferrer continuing his letter, adds: "Signor, it is very certain that by their nature, tem-

poral things are neither evil nor opposed to spiritual things, when one knows how to use them for the purpose for which God created them." In accordance with this principle, he solicits the revealer of the globe to persevere in his discoveries, and assures him that the great material things he will discover will conduce to the honor of God as well as to the advantage of the whole Christian world.

It is only after these moral and religious considerations, that the lapidary of Burgos, coming to the main object of his letter, says to Columbus: "The Queen has ordered me to write to your Excellency," &c. The end of this missive is not unworthy of its commencement; one sees that its author is penetrated with a veneration almost religious, and that he considers himself as speaking to a saint, to an apostle, to a minister of Providence.

From this epistolary fragment, which, with deep regret, we have been obliged to abridge, we come to the following conclusions:

First. The superhuman character of the discovery of Columbus is declared by the most learned cosmographer of that period,—a man of the most fertile and cultivated intellect, and one of the most enlightened and sincere Catholics of Spain.

Secondly. Three years before the discovery of the new continent, and while Columbus's first essay at circumnavigating the earth was still unknown in Castile, Jaime Ferrer considered it already as realized. It is to be remembered that Columbus did not discover the *terra firma* or main land, until the 1st of August, 1498, and that Jaime Ferrer wrote to him for the first time the 5th of August, 1495.

Thirdly. The lapidary of Burgos is, after Columbus, the first layman who declared as a natural consequence of the great discovery, the junction of the East with the West, and the propagation of the Gospel throughout the whole globe. He is also the first who recognized the true character of the mission confided to the Messenger of Salvation, to fulfil the prophecies regarding distant nations.

Let it not be forgotten especially that this far-seeing genius, when Columbus, after his triumphal return to Barcelona, had as yet met with only honors and homages, already promises him, under the veil of an allusion, cruel trials, and announces to him that he will yet have to bear his cross, in the train of his Divine Redeemer, in the thorny paths of suffering.

For historic justice as well as for the exactitude and faithfulness of the biography of Columbus we have undertaken to write; we have considered it a duty to rescue from secular oblivion this learned lapidary, whom writers of a certain school have ignored or remained silent about. We find in him a witness, that cannot be gainsaid, for Columbus, against the retrospective accusations of his enemies. Besides, nobody among his contemporaries judged more justly than he did of the revealer of the globe, and of the future consequences of his unequalled discovery. We may say without fear of contradiction that Father Juan Perez de Marchina before, Queen Isabella during, and Jaime Ferrer after, the

discovery, were the three intelligences to whom it was given to comprehend most thoroughly the genius and virtue of Christopher Columbus, and the celestial character of his mission.

From these circumstances and the sentiments so loudly avowed by Jaime Ferrer for Columbus, notwithstanding the studied reticence of certain historians on this topic, it cannot be doubted that during his forced sojourn at Burgos, the Admiral of the Ocean had intimate and consoling relations with this lapidary, who, without his knowledge, became his friend, before he publicly declared himself his admirer.

SELF-CONQUEST; OR, THE ROAD TO PEACE.

A STORY WITH A MORAL.

Chapter VII.

As soon as Mrs. Blundell left, Mrs. Montfort, like an able tactician, wrote at once to Mr. Blamont, informing him of that lady's arrival in Paris, and the effort she had made to see Miss Mason. She added, that she had reason to believe Mrs. Blundell's means were very limited, whence she inferred that her great anxiety to renew her acquaintance with Honorine arose from a desire to increase her own income. She concluded by telling him the clever plan she had adopted to prevent the interview, until she should receive his express directions on the matter.

Mr. Blamont was just then particularly engaged in weighty speculations, and gave the subject very little consideration; thinking Mrs. Montfort's conjectures very plausible, he replied, that he quite approved of her conduct; that he did did not wish his ward should form an intimacy with Mrs. Blundell, and that if that lady insisted on seeing her the inverview must be short, and take place only in Mrs. Montfort's presence; adding, that he alone had legal authority over Miss Mason until she attained her majority, and that nothing would induce him to give it up sooner.

He had scarcely despatched this answer when he received a letter from Mrs. Blundell, requesting his sanction and authority to see Honorine, and expressing a wish, that he would intrust her with his ward for a few days during the approaching vacation.

Mr. Blamont felt no difficulty in replying to this letter. A mere man of business, he cared little about wounding the feelings of a complete stranger, whom he, moreover, suspected of interested motives. He replied, that Miss Mason had been confided to his care by her father, who having directed that she should not go into society until the age of eighteen, or form, in the meantime, any acquaintance with strangers, he could not, consistently with his instructions, consent to place her until then under any other care than his own, or that of her watchful mistress. He

hoped Mrs. Blundell would allow his anxious desire of honorably fulfilling his duty towards his ward to plead his excuse for this refusal, and ended by remarking, that the better to prevent Honorine's attention from being distracted from her studies, he wished her to receive very few visits, and had communicated his desire on that subject to Mrs. Montfort. Mrs. Blundell was quite unprepared for this disappointment, but she knew well that no one could contest Mr. Blamont's authority over Honorine. What pained her most acutely, was to find that her affectionate letter remained unacknowledged by the little girl whom she so fondly loved; to whom she had promised to be a mother, and who could not have entirely forgotten her. She did not for a moment suspect that this letter had never reached Honorine. She determined, however, to make another effort, hoping that a few minutes' conversation with Mr. Blamont, and an explanation of the close friendship that had existed between her and Honorine's parents, would induce him to change his mind. She called at Mr. Blamont's, and sent in her card, but was told he was out. She returned several successive days at different hours, but invariably received the same answer, evidently proving that Mr. Blamont had given directions to be denied whenever she called. No alternative now remained but to wait patiently till Honorine's school-days were over; but as she was unwilling to let her think her feeling changed, she determined on writing to her again.

This letter had the same fate as the first. Mrs. Blundell was both pained and surprised at the neglect of her affectionate letters, and judging that any further attempts at correspondence with Miss Mason would be useless, concluded on waiting for a more fitting time and opportunity to prove the sincerity of her friendship.

Chapter VIII.

Louisa Grenville, whose education was now quite finished, left school this year, and an eligible opportunity of usefully and respectably employing her talents soon offered. The Countess of St. Alban, a most exemplary mother, being anxious to secure her services for her daughters, engaged her at a very liberal salary. Honorine remained some years longer at school, Mrs. Montfort each day allowing her more uncontrolled liberty, and trying to render her residence with her more agreeable, that she might be induced to remain the longer. On this point she completely seconded Mr. Blamont's views, he being by no means anxious that his ward should go into society yet; he wished to retard the period of her settlement in life, that he might the longer enjoy the use of her fortune. The animated descriptions of the pleasures of fashionable life which Honorine received from some of her late companions, who came to see her, at length, however, excited her anxiety to participate in them, and she therefore urged her guardian, most perseveringly, to have her introduced. Being more than nineteen years of age her request could not be denied; all that could be done, was to delay her entrance

into society, on the plea that it would be necessary to place her on quitting school under the protection of some steady and respectable friend; and to meet a person suited to fill this important and responsible post, was, it was asserted, a matter of extreme difficulty. Honorine for a moment thought of Mrs. Blundell, but only to reject the idea as inadmissible. Besides the antipathy to that lady excited by the accounts she had received of her austere notions, she felt she had been neglected by her, having heard nothing of her since her first attempt to obtain an interview. In this conclusion, Honorine, as we have seen, was wrong and unjust.

Honorine had been so many years accustomed to the society and flattery of her teacher, that the latter found it easy to manage her according to her own views. She actually led Miss Mason to believe that she was making quite a heroic sacrifice in giving up her establishment for her sake, and devoting her life to her interests. Honorine, on her part, thought she could acknowledge this proof of disinterested and devoted friendship, only by securing to her, with Mr. Blamont's consent, a very considerable pension. Well satisfied with this arrangement, Mrs. Montfort, when resigning her establishment to one of her assistants, reserved the right of resuming it within five years; thus, providing against the chance of her pupil being married, or no longer requiring her society; she, however, took care not to let her know these arrangements.

Mrs. Montfort, wishing to acknowledge the service Mr. Blamont had rendered her in this matter, was perpetually expatiating, in Honorine's presence, on his merit, regularity, probity, and great cleverness in matters of business, and her extreme good fortune in having a person so clever and upright to manage her affairs. These observations led Honorine to think she could not do better than leave her fortune in Mr. Blamont's hands, even when she came of age,—a plan particularly satisfactory to that gentleman, who having embarked largely in weighty speculations, and risked Honorine's fortune with his own, would have been seriously embarrassed, if called on to account for it on her majority, which was now very near, her father having named the age of twenty for its completion. Mrs. Montfort was not aware of Mr. Blamont's embarrassments, but felt certain that Miss Mason's wealth must be a source of great profit to any banker having the uncontrolled management of it, and a view to her own interest induced her to favor a man who had always patronized her, and whose good-will was now more essential than ever. Honorine falling into the snare, requested Mr. Blamont to continue the management of her fortune; and as she dreaded trouble above all things, she was delighted to leave to him the selection of her residence, furniture, and equipage.

The house in which the years of her childhood had passed had been let since her father's death. Mr. Blamont had it now fitted up, and furnished in the most modern style; and, thanks to his care, the abode was in every way suited to

the young and stylish person, who was to take possession of it on her twentieth birthday.

Honorine was as much distinguished for her playfulness and vivacity as for her beauty. Her hand was quickly sought, and all the more eagerly, as the report of her great wealth had been widely circulated. On the one side, ambitious mothers were anxious to secure her favor for their sons; on the other, the extravagant and needy caressed her, in hopes of sharing her fortune; all, in a word, yielded to the influence of the new star. Honorine was so long accustomed to adulation, that she received it now merely as a just tribute to her superiority, quite persuaded that she possessed all the perfection attributed to her by interested flatterers. Still the gratification of vanity was far from rendering her happy; and very frequently her most brilliant triumphs were dimmed by painful humiliations. Often, just as she fixed the attention of a crowded and fashionable assembly, she overheard some one ask, "Who is that young lady?" and then followed the equally audible answer, "That is Miss Mason, the grocer's daughter." Mortifications of this kind were most galling to Honorine. She could not pardon her parents the business they had been engaged in, nor the name they had bequeathed her; she wished she had been born a baroness or a marchioness. Her insatiable pride effectually marred her happiness, which, in truth, had but an apparent, not a real existence. Mrs. Montfort endeavored to persuade her that beauty and wealth like hers were far superior to rank or birth; but her arguments were useless, and Honorine finely concluded on bartering her liberty for a title, much to the disappointment of her selfish friend, who was so deeply interested in retaining control over her. Mr. Blamont always coincided with Mrs. Montfort in discovering objections to the persons who proposed for Miss Mason;—he had good reasons for doing so.

Chapter IX.

The insensible being who plunges into the vortex of pleasure, seeks in vain for that peace of mind which diffuses a charm over life, and maintains its soothing influence to the moment of death. Honorine could not find it in dissipation, where she was pursued by that wearying *ennui* she so anxiously desired to shun. She tried all kinds of worldly amusements, but they only filled her with disgust now that they had lost the charm of novelty; admiration had ceased to please, and she led a life as uninteresting to herself as it was useless to others. She never seriously reflected; she wished, she said, to cull only the flowers of life, and was surprised how frequently her fingers were wounded by brambles and thorns.

There was no end to the luxury and extravagance of her establishment. Her fortune seemed unlimited, and she indulged without restraint in every species of foolish expense. The light-minded and frivolous were jealous of her success, and took every opportunity of mortifying her; while the rational and prudent pitied her extravagance, and gradually withdrew, not

presuming to offer advice which was sure to be rejected: she had many flatterers but no friends.

The Baron Florval, a young man who had lost his fortune by gambling and ruinous speculations, was amongst the most ardent of her admirers, and as his pretensions were strengthened by a title, Honorine quickly decided in his favor. He also took care to secure Mrs. Montfort's influence, and the day destined to seal Honorine's fate was speedily named. Nothing could equal the Baron's transports of gratitude and affection. He protested a thousand times that he only wished she were poor, that he might prove his disinterested devotion. Honorine's self-love rendered her unsuspicious of the insincerity of these declarations, and she flattered herself that the projected union would be the source of unalloyed happiness.

Preparations on both sides were made with all possible haste, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of Mrs. Montfort and Mr. Blamont, Honorine Mason was very shorly to become Baroness Florval.

The day appointed for signing the marriage articles had arrived; the notary was in the house, and Mr. Blamont was momentarily expected. Honorine was engaged in examining a superb set of ornaments which the Baron had just brought her. A considerable time thus passed away, and still Mr. Blamont did not make his appearance. Surprise at his unaccountable absence gradually yielded to undefinable uneasiness, and after an unreasonably long delay, it was finally concluded, notwithstanding the Baron's remonstrances, that the business must be deferred until the next day.

Honorine's heavy eye betrayed unmistakable symptoms of severe illness. She had for several days felt painfully indisposed, but had not mentioned the circumstance, lest it should delay her marriage; but on this day she could no longer conceal her state. In a faltering voice she informed Mrs. Montfort that she did not feel well; but that lady observed that her illness was merely the natural result of the day's excitement, and would, no doubt, pass away after a night's rest. Honorine had scarcely reached the drawing-room door when the servant handed her a letter.

"Read it, I beg of you," said she to her friend, "for I am not able."

The perusal appeared to agitate Mrs. Montfort exceedingly. "Heavens!" she exclaimed, "what sad news! Unfortunate Mr. Blamont."

"What has happened to him?" asked Honorine, feebly.

"Oh! 'tis a dreadful thing; he has been obliged to quit Paris in haste."

Honorine raised her eyes inquiringly to know what she meant, and her officious friend lost no time in giving an explanation; she plainly told her that Mr. Blamont's bank had that day failed, and that he had absconded.

"But Miss Mason's for — fortune!" stammered the thunderstruck Baron, who scarcely knew what he was saying; and rising hastily, declared he would go at once to the Chaussée d'Antin, and endeavor to ascertain precisely what had occurred.

Honorine could keep up no longer, and begging Mrs. Montfort to

come and tell her all further particulars, they parted, the one to pass the first night of suffering she had ever known, the other to consider the probable consequences of the late event.

The information contained in the note was but too correct; a great part of the truth had, however, been suppressed, and it was only the next morning that Mrs. Montfort learned the full extent of Miss Mason's loss. Mr. Blamont had been declared bankrupt, and had fled, to avoid meeting his creditors; the failure of weighty and extensive speculations had caused his ruin, and that of those who trusted him, none of whom, it was said, would ever receive a penny of their money. Mrs. Montfort was not much surprised, for she had long suspected that Mr. Blamont was deeply embarrassed. Judging by herself, she imagined he had not gone away with an empty purse, and that he proposed enjoying the fruits of his dishonesty in a foreign land, and she felt much annoyed that he had not intrusted her with his fraudulent plan.

Honorine was ruined, and this was no doubt vexatious enough to Mrs. Montfort, who must now lose her comfortable position; she was, however, far from being left destitute. The conditions under which she had resigned her establishment, enabled her still to resume it. Besides, she had really been making a little fortune during the three years she had spent in Honorine's house, as the latter not only allowed her a very handsome salary, but made her frequent and valuable presents. Her only object was now to collect everything that belonged to her, adding to her stores several articles she had long coveted; and this end being accomplished, she prepared to take leave as quickly as possible of a person from whom she had no longer anything to expect. Honorine passed a most wretched night, and at break of day sent for a physician. He came at once, pronounced her in high fever, said she required perfect quietness, and promised to call again a few hours later.

While Mrs. Montfort, and her maid and confidant, Julia, were making preparations for departure, Honorine, amazed at not seeing her friend beside her pillow, sent to inquire for her, and to reproach her for leaving her so long alone.

"I am sorry I could not come sooner," said Mrs. Montfort, in a careless tone, quite unusual when speaking to her *dear friend.* Honorine was too ill to notice it, but asked if there was any further news of Mr. Blamont.

"No."

"Has the Baron Florval returned?"

"Oh! I don't think it likely he will return," coolly replied Mrs. Montfort.

"Why?" asked Honorine, with difficulty raising her head, and quickly compelled by pain to lay it down, "is not the contract to be signed to-day?"

"Oh! things are changed now."

"True, my illness may delay—"

"Have you forgotten the failure?" asked her *friend*, impatiently.

"No; I remember, but I hope that may be settled."

"There is no use in deceiving you, Miss Mason; the duty which

devolves on me is very painful, but it is absolutely necessary you should know the truth. Mr. Blamont is a swindler; he has made away with your fortune; in a word, though it breaks my heart to tell you, you are utterly ruined!"

This was too much for poor Honorine; she uttered a cry of despair, and fainted. Mrs. Montfort, more frightened than affected, rang the bell violently. The waiting maid ran in, and with her came the doctor, who inquired anxiously for his patient. Seeing her state, he found great fault with the imprudence of her attendants, especially after the positive directions he had given to have her kept calm and tranquil; but as Mrs. Montfort informed him of the cause of his patient's nervous exitement, his dissatisfaction gradually subsided, and was replaced by total indifference of manner.

"What! quite ruined! What a villainous business! A great number of creditors, I suppose? It is really a most scandalous affair, and I may well say, misfortunes seldom come alone."

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Mrs. Montfort, somewhat alarmed. "What other misfortune do you foresee?"

"The calamity I allude to will, I imagine, be as deeply felt by this young lady as that you have just communicated to me, for she was, I believe, as proud of her beauty as of her fortune. There is no use now in concealing that the unfortunate girl has the small-pox, and that of the most virulent character."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Montfort, "I never had it."

"Nor I, either," said Julia; and both rushed to the far end of the room.

"Come, dear madan," said the doctor, jestingly, "I recommend you to go away at once, or you, too, may endanger your beauty, and that certainly would be a pity."

For three weeks Honorine remained in a state of insensibility, as it were suspended between life and death. On recovering her senses, she had only a confused recollection of preceding events; she looked round for her friend, but saw near her bed only a poor, slovenly kitchen-maid, who roughly asked if she wanted anything. Honorine turned away with disgust, and feebly inquired for Mrs. Montfort.

"Oh, she is gone, long ago."

"Where is Julia?"

"She went with her. All the servants are gone, but myself."

These words reminded Miss Mason of her sad position; but as yet she could not understand it in its full extent. Besides, she was so weak that she could not connect two ideas at once, and she asked the servant for a full account of all that had happened. The heartless Nannette bluntly related all she knew, without attempting to soften matters or to console the sufferer. Honorine had never taken any trouble about the morality of her servants, or endeavored to gain their hearts by example or precept, therefore they all left her the moment their own interests were in danger. Mrs. Montfort paid their wages with part of the money she found in the house, and discharged them all except Nannette, who remained to take care of her mistress, calculating on future remuneration.

It would be impossible to describe Honorine's feelings during this recital; still she thought Mrs. Montfort's absence could only be occasioned by fear of the disease; and though her conduct appeared ungenerous, she partly excused her, feeling certain she had sent frequently to inquire for her. She asked how long she had been ill, and what the doctor thought of her case.

"Oh, miss, he said it would be the greatest blessing if the Almighty called you away, for that the remainder of your life would be miserable."

"What sickness have I had?" asked the terrified Honorine.

"Neither more nor less than the small-pox; and I can tell you you will have its marks long enough."

A heart-rending cry burst from the parched lips of the unhappy Honorine; and sitting up in bed with a distracted look, she asked, in a faltering voice, for her looking-glass, that she might see what ravages the disease had made. The alarmed servant begged of her to wait till her face was less red and swollen; the request only irritated her, and Nannette was compelled to obey. Honorine seized the mirror with a trembling hand—looked; but who can express her horror at the sight of that face, hitherto viewed with such complacency? Her handsome, regular features, her fresh, smooth complexion, were replaced by a mass of red and swollen flesh; her eyes, whose brilliancy had excited so much admiration, were now dim, and surrounded by black circles; her lips were thick and discolored; in short, her once lovely face had become so hideous, that she could not endure the sight of it. The loss of her fortune appeared comparatively insignificant; she could have borne poverty patiently—at least, so she fancied—but the loss of her beauty was beyond endurance,—a dreadful, an irremediable misfortune. In her anguish she hoped death might soon terminate her misery, and called on it as her only refuge. But she was destined to suffer much more in atonement for her faults, and her rash and impious prayer remained unheard.

The irritability, which even in prosperity could brook no contradiction, was now considerably increased by adversity. She was continually repining at what she called "the injustice of her fate" and the neglect of her friends. Her ravings were terrific; a relapse ensued, and deprived her of her only remaining stay, for the servant kept away as much as possible, and the gloomy reflections which filled her mind in her solitude reduced her to despair. At last, overcome by the vehemence of her feelings, she sank into a heavy slumber, and awoke not only improved in health, but somewhat tranquillized in mind. She felt a desire for food, and though the repast offered was very frugal, she took it without a murmur. From that time, contrary to her own and Nannette's expectation, she got better, and was soon able to rise.

Chapter X.

After a few days, Honorine's face became less hideous, and she hoped that time and artificial means might remove all traces of deformity. She longed to receive her

friends, and even hoped her marriage with Baron Florval might still take place; for she remembered his repeated protestations that he wished she were poor, to give him an opportunity of proving the sincerity and disinterestedness of his affection. Impressed with this idea, she desired Nannette to bring her the cards left for her during her illness. There were only two,—one from Mrs. Belmour, formerly Louisa Grenville, and the other from the Countess of St. Alban. Honorine scarcely believed Nannette and the porter when they assured her that no one else had called. To make amends, there were a great many letters; this cheered her a little; but how great her disappointment on finding that they were tradesmen's bills, amounting altogether to a very considerable sum. Where now was she to seek for advice or consolation? Her friends had deserted her when she most needed their assistance, and amongst all who had flattered and fawned in her prosperity, not one thought of her in the hour of misfortune.

But what could Louisa Grenville or the Countess of St. Alban want with her? Doubtless to gratify themselves by the view of her grief and poverty, and thus seek atonement for former insults. Louisa Grenville, though neither handsome nor wealthy, had then, it would appear, made a great match, and now that she was a fine lady, bearing a distinguished name, she wished to display her superiority over the grocer's daughter! But no, she shall not have such a triumph, she shall not insult her former companion by her presence! So reasoned the unhappy girl, and then, with a spiteful jerk, she threw the crumpled cards into the fire. Again her eyes encountered the frightful pile of bills before her. Never having considered the value of money, nor examined the smallest account, she would gladly have had some one to assist her in the difficult task. Quite persuaded that nothing but illness could have kept Mrs. Montfort so long away, she at once wrote to her, mentioning her embarrassments, and asking her advice. She did not know where her old governess had gone, but conceived that by directing her letter to her former residence, it would be forwarded. For several days she vainly awaited an answer. One by one her illusions vanished; finding she had no one on whom she could rely, she collected all her energy, and determined to try and act for herself, deliberately considering what steps she ought first to take. She at length resolved on making out the assignee appointed to regulate the affairs of Mr. Blamont's bank, hoping that she might recover even a trifling fragment of her original fortune; and, in pursuance of this plan, she went out closely veiled, and for the first time in her life, alone. She found Mr. Bennett, the assignee, surrounded with bundles of papers, and absorbed in his discouraging examination. He himself was a creditor to a very large amount, and he sadly explained to her the hopeless condition of the bankrupt's estate, as well as the little chance that existed of their retrieving any portion of their losses.

Honorine returned home exhausted and dejected, wept all day

despairingly, and yielded to the most agonizing reflections. Mrs. Montfort had not answered her letter. What could cause her silence? Could it be that this catastrophe had reduced her friend to similar indigence? No doubt a feeling of delicacy had urged her to quit, lest she might hereafter be a burden to her. Whatever the cause of her absence, she determined to seek out her retreat the next day, so that if both were equally unfortunate, they might at least weep together, and derive consolation and strength from their friendship. Misfortune had roused Honorine's energy; she started early next day, going first to the house where she had been educated. When the carriage stopped at the door, Honorine recollected the kind reception she had met on her first introduction, and all the affection Mrs. Montfort had ever afterwards evinced towards her, and these pleasing reminiscences dispelled the effect of her governess's parting words, the cold harshness of which had left a confused but painful impression. If she be here, she has a home, and will share it with me, thought Honorine, as she approached the house.

"Do you know if Mrs. Montfort be here?" said she to the porteress.

"Yes, Miss."

Honorine waited for no further information; she knew every turn of the house, and before she could be announced, was in her old mistress's apartment.

"To whom have I the honor of speaking?" said Mrs. Montfort, rising with apparent surprise.

"Am I then so changed?" said Honorine, reproachfully. "Do you not recollect your dear Honorine's voice, Mrs. Montfort?" and she ran to throw herself into her arms.

"Madam," replied Mrs. Montfort, drawing back a few steps, "you have the advantage of me."

"That is the handsome Miss Honorine's voice," exclaimed a little boarder, who was beside her mistress, and who had been a great favorite with Honorine when at school.

"Impossible, my child," said Mrs. Montfort, feigning surprise, "Honorine Mason was——"

"Rich and beautiful once," interrupted Honorine, bitterly; "and Mrs. Montfort's memory was then excellent. Up to this moment I could not bring myself to trust appearances; I wished to see things myself; I have done so, and you have taken care to leave no room for doubt as to the generosity of your conduct. Your lesson, though tardy, will be useful. Depend upon it, I shall not again intrude on you!"

"Do not go away, dear Honorine," said the little girl, running after her, and catching her by the dress; "I would be so sorry you should go away, though I am the only person here who likes you."

Honorine affectionately embraced the innocent child, who had no idea what an additional pang she had inflicted. With tearful eyes and bowed head, Honorine was rapidly descending the stairs, but before she had gone two steps, fresh mortifications awaited her. All her former companions being at recreation, rushed forward to see her as she passed.

"Can that be Honorine Mason?" asked one.

"Oh! how ugly the small-pox has made her," said another.

"How can she afford to wear such an expensive dress?" inquired a third.

"Farewell! proud beauty," shouted a fourth, as the poor orphan hurried away, more anxious to leave Mrs. Montfort's house than she had been to reach it.

After shedding torrents of tears, poor Honorine gave way to the bitterest reflections. What a contrast between her present position and her past prosperity. What a sad difference between the fulsome flattery she had then received and the utter neglect she now experienced. How could she feel otherwise than indignant with the perfidious and ungrateful Mrs. Montfort?

When she reached home her head ached violently, and she was so feverish that she had to go to bed, and could not get up till late next morning. While still suffering from the excitement of the preceding day, she was told that Mrs. Belmour wished to see her.

"Louisa Grenville again! Tell her I cannot see any one," replied Honorine.

Nannette returned in a moment, saying Mrs. Belmour requested to know when she could see her.

"Tell her," said Honorine, impatiently, "I cannot even see my friends. Alas!" she exclaimed, "my friends, where are they? Who is it that now casts a thought on Honorine Mason? Is she not an object of universal derision and contempt?"

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS.

At the risk of being remonstrated with by grave theologians, frowned down by graver historians, and pitied by those gravest of men, the philosophers, I am prepared to defend as a proposition that Christmas, and the Christian holidays in general, prove the divinity of our religion quite as practically as half the arguments with which musty, old, controversial tomes are filled.

"The idea!" exclaims Theologus; "the idea of drawing an argument from a holiday! Why, it would prove every creed divine, for every religion has its feasts!"

"Then, too," chimes in Historicus, "it appears that the Christian festivals—Christmas, in particular—were originally pagan festivities which the Church reformed."

"I see no intrinsic connection," breaks in Philosophus, "between a holiday, a feast, or a fast, and the divinity of the religion which establishes it. And this, for twenty-two reasons, which for the sake of clearness may be subdivided into forty-four, viz., first, because"——

Excuse me, gentlemen, I say, helplessly, but life in general, and Christmas eve in particular, is short. So if we wish to close the discussion within any reasonable length of time, you must let me answer the objections in passing.

I premise that religious festivals in themselves do not prove divine the creed which celebrates them, although they show in a general way the nature of true religion, because religion necessarily seeks expression, puts on an outer vestment, and gives an external sign of its inner life. All religion is thus visible, because it has to deal not only with spiritual but with corporeal man. I know that an objection to this is supposed to be in Christ's words about worshipping the Father in spirit and truth, but this internal adoration, so far from excluding, really implies external and visible worship. "Even bodily adoration is made in spirit," says St. Thomas, "inasmuch as it flows from spiritual devotion and receives its form from it." The religious sentiment of all ages and peoples has sought this expression in rites, ceremonies, liturgies and festivals; nor can we, without doing injustice to the human mind, refer it to blind superstition.

Now, as the visible and external mirrors the invisible, so the character of a festival, the manner of a celebration, and the ceremonies incident to it, reveal the religious idea and sentiment which underlie and fashion it. The feelings which the festival awakens, the recollections that encircle it, the actions it prompts, the general influence which it exercises, are also illustrative of the nature of the religion which holds it. Unless you pronounce these festivals meaningless, which is absurd, you must attach to them the significance of which I have spoken.

"May we not explain them," asks Theologus, "on the ground that men, particularly in early times, were childlike in their love of pageantry and scenic effect, and observed their festivals through no distinctive religious impulse, but simply to be pleased and charmed by the amusements, games and banquets, that formed the accessories of nearly all the pagan festivals?"

You unwittingly help me to establish my point; for if such was the spirit that animated the observance of the pagan festivals, it certainly reveals the materialistic character of heathenism. But not all the religious days were accompanied by the amusements and feasts of which you speak; and you properly say that they were mere accessories, for the main feature of the pagan celebrations was not the banqueting or the games, but the performance of religious rites.

"Religious training and traditional observance, seem to me," remarks Philosophus, "to account satisfactorily for the presence of religious rites and festivals. We all know how instinctively men cling to precedents and relics which the past has established."

The explanation would not reach the main point, the institution and long continuance of such festivals. Nor is it true that the past is held in such reverence, whilst our love of novelty and our restlessness under religious restraint should act as powerfully for the abolition of religious festivals, as a fancied love of the past for their retention.

"Come to the history, sir," says Historicus, sternly.

Well, take the Jewish ceremonial, as it is the most ancient.

Prescinding from the unquestionable divinity of the Hebrew worship, let us see if it can, *per se*, certify the claims it set up to be of heavenly origin. Did its ceremonial possess characteristics, express ideas, and exercise an influence which pointed to God as author? What object was there in the institution of the Judaic feasts? The service of God, the commemoration of the benefit he bestowed on the nation. Truly a sublime idea. The Sabbath recalled the creation, and figured the mysterious rest of the Creator. The passover, the feast of tabernacles, and the other celebrations held at various seasons of the year, had all to do with God, were directed to his honor, and served to recall him and his works to the memory of the celebrants. What was the sacrificial idea? To bear testimony to the supreme dominion of the Creator, and to make an imperfect return to him for the blessings and favors which he imparted. The difference in the form and object of the sacrifices was also illustrative of the divinity of the creed. There were the sin-offering, the peace-offering, and the holocaust, to expiate offences, to obtain new favors, and to acknowledge the divine sovereignty. Morning and evening the smoke of the sacrifice ascended, thus reminding the people of the continued presence of the Most High, and the duty of daily honoring and worshipping him. The details of the sacrifice also indicated the divinity of the creed. Spotless and perfect victims were the only ones accepted, to show that the best of earth belongs to the Lord. The purifications, lustrations, and expiations, prescribed for the persons who had contracted legal defilement, served to show the purity and holiness which the Almighty looks for in his servants. The splendor of the Temple, the grandeur of the ritual, the solemnity of the rites, awakened naturally the reverence and fear with which the throne of the Lord should be approached. The profound veneration in which the ark was held, exercised likewise a powerful influence in forming the religious sentiment. The distinction between clean and unclean animals and food, removed the Israelites from intercourse with surrounding idolatrous nations that made no such distinction. In a word, the entire Judaic ceremonial was designed to promote the glory and honor of the one true and eternal God, and its presence and observance in times when the world was sunk in idolatry is proof sufficient that it was not a human invention, but a divine institution.

Everything about the festivals pointed to the Creator; everything conferred to promote his honor and awaken a fear of his judgments. It is absurd to think that in that remote and heathen age man could have framed such a ceremonial, imposed such a liturgy, or continued its observance through a period ranging over thousands of years.

"Spencer," says Historicus, "in treating of the Hebrew laws, traces most of the Jewish rites to the Egyptians and other idolatrous peoples."

Spencer fell into a very common fallacy. There may be faint resemblances found between Jewish and some idolatrous rites, though in

the main they were heaven-wide different. Many religious observances date from the dawn of creation; sacrifice, for instance. As I said, it is not the ceremonial exactly, but the idea and spirit of the ceremonial, which we must look at. Besides, Spencer does not show that the Egyptian rites, said to have been identical with those established by Moses, originated before his time.

"Many of the Jewish rites," objects Philosophus, "were of a character which show any but a divine origin. Think of God forbidding men to cut their hair close!"

"Oh! there's no difficulty there," replies Historicus, "for the Sabians were wont so to shave their heads as an idolatrous practice; and as the warding off of idolatry seems to have been the main idea in the institution of the Jewish ceremonial, there was every reason for the prohibition of a practice which might have suggested idolatrous thoughts, especially to the mind of a people like the Jews, who were prone to superstition and image-worship."

"There is, however," says Theologus, "an objection against the Jewish system of rites and laws which has not been mentioned, but which summarily overturns our good friend's elaborate argument for 'the divine ceremonial.'" The Mosaic law commands human sacrifices. No one will say that a law which prescribes the immolation of human beings can have God for its author. The thought is horrible. Yet the tenor of the Jewish religion so far from being adverse to a practice than which nothing can be more barbarous or devilish, favors, nay commands it. Abraham is ordered to immolate Isaac; Agag is to be sacrificed; the Madianites are to be apportioned for the sacrificial knife; and in Leviticus, a person "vowed to the Lord," as in the case of Jeptha's daughter, "was to die the death."

"Do ye not so," commands Moses, forbidding human sacrifices, and referring to the Canaanites who offered them. "Do ye not so, for the Lord condemneth all the abominations which that people do to their gods, offering to them their sons and daughters, burning them with fire." Here then is an express prohibition of human sacrifice, so clear and emphatic that the obscure text which our friend Theologus brings forward is wholly inadmissible. A man vowed to the Lord was not slain, but kept for the perpetual service of the temple. Neither Isaac nor the daughter of Jeptha was put to death; though, did the latter suffer from the harshness and rashness of her parent's vow, he, not the Lord, must be blamed. In view of the prohibition of such sacrifices, we must explain the case of Agag and others, on the ground that they were put to death for their sins, or underwent the punishment sanctioned by the military code of the times.

I do not think that I need enter at length on the ceremonial of paganism, for none of you will look to it for evidences of a divine origin. A rapid glance, however, at the principal festivals of heathendom will serve to bring out my argument more fully. If we look merely at the outside of heathen festivals, we are charmed, fascinated, overpowered. Splendid as was the

ritual of Judaism, it seems modest and humble alongside of the pomp and grandeur in which Greek and Roman idolatry flaunted. The spirit of the Greek festivals was intensely and exclusively human. Each was an apotheosis of humanity. The "God-born people," as they called themselves, did not so much honor their deities as themselves. At the Olympic games Jove was forgotten for the daring athlete, the successful poet, the victorious soldier. The gods were part of the national mind, symbols of the national characteristics. Apollo was Greek poetry; Minerva, Greek wisdom. The lower appetites were also deified: Venus was lust; Bacchus, drunkenness and gluttony. This is the spirit of mythology, and its festivals expressed it. Judaism was God, all in all, supreme. Greek mythology was man, all in all, supreme. Hence the very worst and most bestial inclinations and tendencies of human nature flourished and thrived in Greece, pride or the deification of human nature being the root and seed. Of all mythologies, the Grecian was unquestionably the foulest, and its festivals partook of its spirit. Need I describe one of these? I have only to mention the name of the god in whose honor it was pretended to be held, and tell you what natural inclination the god symbolized, and you behold the scene better than I can describe it, for you have its spirit.

The Roman mythology was, in some respects, worse, and in others better than the Greek. The Romans were an imitative people. They originated nothing, borrowing everything, even their religion, from the peoples whom they subjugated. Rome is the ideal of brute force—energy guided by reproductive intellect alone. What she lacked in genius she made up in force. So Roman mythology is an incoherent assemblage of all the gods which the human mind ever invented. We find traces of Judaism in her creed. Nay, our Lord's statue stood among the gods that lined the temples. From this incongruous, unintellectual mythology we turn in disgust! Greece was at least scientific. There is an order and harmony in her deification of herself. This Rome could not do; its mythology was not animated by that cold, intellectual, diabolical pride which appeared in all the Grecian rites and ceremonies.

Hence the Romans cared little about deifying their passions, or calling their vices by pretty names. Their superstition was more reverential, their worship more genuine than that of the Greeks. Their very brutishness, in many of their celebrations, had the merit, so to speak, of being open, unconcealed, bearing its own name.

"Yet," says Historicus, "in both mythologies there were celebrations of a gentle, human, kindly spirit. The harvest was carried in with song and joy. Many of the deities were of singularly beautiful conception. Many of the festivals evoked goodwill and friendship."

You know, dear friend, better than I, that there was not a single festival in paganism of a cheerful nature, into which lust, drunkenness, and excess did not enter and flow out from as source and cause. Ceres, the goddess of the harvest,

was worshipped with rites akin to those celebrated in honor of Venus. There is no denying that the lowest passions of humanity were drawn forth, encouraged, pandered to, by every accessory of a festival in heathendom. The good-will evoked must have been of very dubious character, for among all the institutions of Greece and Rome, there cannot be found one of a charitable or benevolent kind. The good-will evaporated with the fumes of the wine drunk in honor of Bacchus.

When we come to examine the festivals of other forms of heathenism, the gloom of the scene deepens. We have no accounts of the Druidical celebrations, further than that they were dark, bloody, fearful. Human sacrifices were offered, and victims tortured. As if shrinking from the light of day, the Druids held their festivals at night. In fact, there seems to have been no feast, no rite of a sunny, joyous nature, in any of the dark superstitions that brooded over the North. Between them and Asiatic heathenism there seems to be an affinity. Buddhism is synonymous with gloom and terror. Perhaps the American Indians hold as pure a mythology as that of any other tribe of heathen men, chiefly because they have never grown out of childhood, puerility being the mark of all their vices as well as virtues.

Contrast all this with the Christian, Catholic feast—with Christmas, say, and deny, if you can, my conclusion. You remember that I said that Judaism showed forth God, to the comparative putting aside and obscuring of man; whilst heathenism extolled the creature to the complete exclusion of the Creator. Christianity brings both together in their full and beautiful relations. The Incarnation gives the spirit, thought, idea, to the Christian feast. Thus, on saints' days, we glory in the exaltation of human nature, in Christ, the fount and reason of all the supernatural perfection to which our nature in the saints is raised. In honoring them, we honor him. He, not we, deifies men. God is blessed, even as he is wonderful, in his saints. To what does such a celebration stimulate us? Does it awaken pride, ambition, lust, envy, worldliness? Nay, it suppresses them all. We celebrate the triumph of humility over pride, lowliness and self-denial over ambition, chastity over impurity, faith and love over the world.

As to the influence exercised by the Christian feasts, look at Christmas, which enkindles, by the very force of its coming, even the cold hearts of men untouched by Christian faith. The world welcomes the holiday; its very name is like ointment poured out upon wounded feelings, uncharitableness, stinginess, and coldness. What is its idea? The birth of the Saviour, who chiefly and solely deserves the name; whose work abides forever; the visible appearing of the Invisible God; the shining forth of inaccessible light; the veiled epiphany and manifestation of him on whose face Moses could not look and live. Salvation is the theme, the thought, the joy of the day. To us is born a Saviour; and in the great gladness which the day awakens, men of good-will meet in peace. The birthday of our Saviour, what in heathen ritual was like it? Why, the very name was unknown. St.

Augustine had to coin the word *Salvator* to express the character and mission of Christ. See too, how the thought that God came into the world, poorer than the poorest, warms the heart, humbles pride, evokes tenderness and care for all the men whom he came, on Christmas night, to save. If the world last for ten thousand years to come, that birthday celebration will last, that peace dawn, that kindness and good-will bloom. Where are the Bacchanalian revels of heathendom? Dead, forgotten; the wreaths with which the guests crowned their heads withered; the song hushed forever. But the midnight glory which rested on the shepherds of Bethlehem has not faded yet. The Christmas song of the angels still enchants the world.

AVE MARIA.

Ave Maria! Maiden mild!
Listen to a maiden's prayer;
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
Though vanquished, outcast and reviled;
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
The flinty couch we now must share,
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
Mother, hear a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!
Foul demons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid—a maiden's prayer!
And for a father hear a child.

—*From Sir Walter Scott's "Marmion."*

PERSECUTION IN GERMANY.

THE German legislature has not delayed to make good the threats that were not obscurely implied in the letter of the Emperor William to the Catholic Bishops of Prussia. The Reichstag has not as yet completed its second session, and already it has signalized its hostility against the Catholic Church by an act of persecution.

The anti-Catholic press, which is also to a considerable extent anti-Christian, had been preparing the public mind for the measure. The insolence of the clergy in preferring to accept the interpretation of the Church on matters of faith instead of the dictates of the Bavarian Ministry or the Prussian Chancery, was the theme of continual denunciations. The freedom with which the episcopate maintained the right of Catholic children to an education in conformity with their faith, evoked the indignation of the Liberalist scribes of Germany. Finally, the not ill-grounded expectation that the immorality of the proposed compulsory Secular Marriage Law would find an uncompromising opponent in that Church which is the appointed guardian of morality, seems to have roused the party to uncontrollable wrath. The Catholic Church has been found to stand between Germany and the abyss of materialism and infidelity into which her blood-and-iron politicians are precipitating the country. Her influence over the portions of the population whose faith is sound and whose morals are pure is known and dreaded by the persistent enemies of both. It has been determined, accordingly, to attempt anew to control that influence by the terrors of the penal code.

The Statute Book of Imperial Germany is amply provided already with enactments in support of the powers that be. For the desired oppression of the Catholic clergy a special enactment has been deemed necessary. The notorious Von Lütz, the Bavarian Minister of Irreligion and Mis-education, proposed it in the *Bundesrath*, or Council of the Confederated Governments. Prince Bismarck supported the proposal, both in the Upper House and in the *Reichstag*, or Chamber of Deputies. The second reading was voted by an overwhelming majority, and it has been read a third time and passed.

"Every clergyman or other minister of religion" (thus runs the bill) "who, in the exercise, or in connection with the exercise of his calling, shall openly, before any assemblage of persons in a church or other place set apart for religious worship, announce or discuss matters connected with the state in a manner which may appear to be calculated to lead to a breach of the public peace, shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding two years." The bill is at once insultingly false and dishonestly vague.

When has the influence of the Catholic Church, for this is what the measure implies, been exerted against the public peace—the Catholic Church, which is the firmest support of good government and

the strongest pledge of public security? The charge is a pitiful calumny, and its promoters are aware of it. We used to be told that the Church was too much on the side of governments, too much opposed to revolution and disorder. The calumniators of the faith cannot afford to be consistent.

But the deliberate vagueness of the wording in which the menace is expressed is not the least significant feature of the bill. Any "matter connected with the state," which is announced or discussed "in a manner which may appear calculated to lead to a breach of the public peace," is to be a cause of imprisonment. When the state claims to interfere with everything, and to pronounce upon everything, no matter how foreign to its proper province, what matter may not be held to be "connected with the state?" And no matter connected with the state is to be announced or discussed in a manner "which may appear to be calculated to lead to a breach of the peace." "Which may appear to be calculated"—was there ever such juggling with words? Writers on legislation tell us that a law ought to be precise; that nothing is more unjust and detrimental than vagueness or obscurity. But who is to explain the vagueness and obscurity of this appearance of a calculation of a tendency, for which Catholic priests are to be dragged from the very altar and thrust into the common jail? But the Lütz-Bismarck policy has deliberately left the law in such a condition, for it is not a law which has been made, but a trap which has been set. "He would be a wily priest indeed," writes the correspondent of the *Standard*, "who could see his way to evading the terms of this clause; on the contrary the introduction of the words 'may appear' opens a wide field for any energetic German Whalley to indulge in his hobby at the expense of the priests." It is after this fashion that the new Empire bids for the loyalty of the Catholics of Germany.

It is easy to see how the trick is intended to work. Minister von Lütz, the nominal Catholic, who allows his children to be educated as Protestants, holds that the Vatican Council is in opposition to the state. Prince Bismarck, through his obedient mouthpiece the Emperor William, has expressed a similar opinion. The doctrine of the Vatican Council, the ancient faith of Catholicity, is, accordingly, a matter intimately "connected with the state;" and since to support views condemned by the state and dangerous to the state, is evidently a course of conduct which "may appear to be calculated to lead to" anything a Government may be pleased to imagine, it follows that the Catholic Bishop or the Catholic Priest, "or other minister of religion," who teaches the doctrines of the Catholic Church, can be sent to jail for two years, without even the option of a fine. Again, if the state decrees next year that the Catholic schools are to be infidelized or secularized, any clergyman who ventures to say that infidelity and secularism are anti-Catholic, is at once liable to punishment. A similar penalty will be incurred if the Church persists in saying that Holy Matrimony is

a divine sacrament, and not a "contract of cohabitation."

The German persecutors may proceed with their wretched essays at intimidation. We would ask them to read the history of the past if they would learn what is to be the issue of their paltry tyranny. Do they really fancy that the Catholic Church will be more pliable to the caprices of Bismarcks and Lützes than to those of a hundred dead and vanquished persecutors; or that the dungeons of Spandau are more terrible than the axes of the prætor and the wild beasts of the circus? Do they dream that they will dare even to inflict imprisonment on the pastors of twelve millions of Germans?

GRETCHEN'S GUEST.

The great town that to-day is full of life and stir was at that time not thought of. Where the sunshine falls now upon the brilliant shops, upon the gay carriages, upon the hurrying crowd, it lay then upon sweet meadow grass, unbroken, save by the passing clouds, or the shadow of the kine in the silent fields, or the robber crows that lived in their stronghold in the ancient forest hard by, and wheeled in daring foray above the newly ploughed land.

The grand market-place and the stately squares, the noble cathedral church, with its shrines, and carvings, and painted windows, was then but a city underground, reposing in quarries and mines, or in the heart of greenwood trees, awaiting the call to its new life. For the town, whither on market-days the peasants' wives rode with their well-stowed panniers, and whither the maidens went decked in all their bravery to mass or fair; the town, with its ten thousand indwellers, its rich abbey, its sleek burgomasters and stalwart men-at-arms, and which has now but a tumble-down, decayed, almshousy sort of an existence; was then more than a league away from the little hamlet that is to-day a city. I was going to say that what it is had nothing to do with what it was; but I retract. It has everything in the world to do with it. With the time when the populous streets were mere forest paths, and when the din of the great town was only the clang of the forge iron, or the splash of the mill-stream.

Your hand, and we will cross the planks that bridge the flux of the past; here, somewhat decayed and insecure, there, slippery, and overgrown with the green deposit of years.

So, now we are over. The hard stony lineaments of the city lose their rigidity in the waning light. They become impalpable with something of dream-wavering, reconstruct themselves into their original combinations of rock and wood, and stand out in solemn

beauty beneath the stars. Pointed arch and flying buttress of the great church melt into dim vistas of forest trees springing towards heaven, with the delicate tracery of the frost carving upon their branches. The roar of the city softens into a hum, and resolves itself into a soothing sound of falling water, as the mill-wheel goes its round. The echo of the clocks that have but now chimed the hour from tower and steeple, circles out into the air, and comes faintly back through the twilight years in the music of the Christmas bells from that old town more than a league and centuries away. And now it grows darker and darker; we can no longer distinguish the track by which we came, for the fast-falling snow obliterates every path. We can no longer hear falling water or Christmas bells through the pleasant night stillness, for the winter storm howls through the pines and around the mill, as if the evil ones had been exorcised by the holy sound, and wailed in their agony of impotent despair.

Little Gretchen lay in her little bed in the mill-chamber on Christmas Eve long ago. In all the mill-house there was not one living creature but herself and the old blackbird that hung in his wicker cage in the kitchen below; for Hans, the miller, was carousing with some of his boon companions at the ale-house in the distant town, and Fritz, his man, had saddled the old horse, and jogged off as soon as his master's back was turned; for he knew very well that he was safe for that night. The blackbird slept soundly, with his head tucked warmly beneath his wing; Gurtha, the wicked watch-dog in the yard, lay dreaming in her house, curled up out of the reach of the drifting snow. Even the people of the hamlet were a league off, hearing the midnight mass in the great abbey church. Only little Gretchen lay awake, with her blue eyes full of tears, as she thought how lonely she was. She had seen, from the mill window, the neighbors all passing in their holiday clothes—some in carts, and some on horses; and the mothers had their children with them, even the little babies in their arms, going to the great church in the town. Then she thought how fine it must be to be going there, to see the lights, and hear the heavenly chanting to the new-born King, and smell the incense, and watch the priests in their purple and golden robes, grander than the emperor himself. But above all, O, far above! to kneel before the shrine of our Lady with the Child, who held out his hands so lovingly; and to say the prayer that her mother had taught her, before she went to heaven!

Her tears flowed fast when she thought there would be no one to carry even her name to the holy feet; and she said mournfully, "Alas! when he shall see all the neighbors there without me, he will be angry, or, perhaps, he will forget me, and he will not think of me for a whole year long!" And she almost felt that she must put on her little mantle, and run to present herself, and ask him to remember her; but although she did not dread the darkness of the road, or the wolves that lived in the forest, she feared her father's anger

For stern of brow and hard of speech was the miller.

So little Gretchen had stood gazing out at the whirling eddies of snow until long after the last passer-by had gone, and she thought as she watched the pure white flakes that never seemed to touch the earth, "Perhaps in those snow robes the good angels fly to-night, and some of them will watch beside our door until the bright sun shines out to-morrow!" And she said, for she was but a little child; "O Heaven birds! if to-night you fly and perch upon the church-roof, ask him to bless Gretchen so far away!" Then there was a pause for a moment, as if they had been really waiting for her message, and presently round and round, faster and faster, they flew past the houses and above the forest, towards the distant town. But soon the white wings had also passed, and the thick darkness came up from the ground shadows, and sat rocking and moaning in the tops of the tall trees; and the winter storm, with its mourning hood of mist and bitter hail tears, came rushing down the hills and over the river, as if it had been driven forth to-night from the rejoicing town, and it seemed as if it howled and raged round the mill, trying, in the blind fury of its giant strength, to pluck it up from its foundations and dash it down to the earth.

Then little Gretchen thought, as she lay in her little bed, of the wehr wolf with the flaming eyes, and of the dark huntsman who rides through the night, to see whom is death; and of the wicked ones with the fair cruel faces and foul trailing serpent bodies, that peer through the tangled branches in the mysterious depths of the forest, to tempt men; and, above all, of the Skeleton Hand that knocks upon the pane before the dead are called. And she thought, "Were I shut up all night by myself in the old church, I should not fear the cold silent ones in their grave clothes, for I should creep close to the feet of the dear Lord, and I should be safe; but, alas! I am now too far away for him to help me, if they come!" So she hid her eyes with the coverlet, and she heard her heart beating so loudly that it seemed as if the Hand knocked without; and as if in the cold darkness some fearful presence, wrapped in the death mantle, drew near in the chamber to her little bed.

Hearken! Over the forest it came from the distant town. The angry conflict of the night died wailingly off, on great mountain ranges as the holy sound followed hard upon it, and smote it. The strong wind, like a fleet runner, from the watch-tower sped upon its way, bearing good tidings of great joy to all the dwellers in the valleys. Blessings were scattered abroad upon the air, and sprinkled each lintel, as they passed, with the sacred influence.

Then Gretchen's tears flowed fast; but they were not for sorrow, nor did she any longer dread the lonely darkness, nor the evil ones, nor the raging of the tempest; for she knew that now the happy birth-hour had come, and she remembered how the patient dumb oxen, sheltered within their stalls from the winter cold, kneel down in humble adoration, and how the birds

fly up to the star mansions to be fed by the angels, and learn the songs of the skies; and how to-night the innocent ones, sleeping on mother's bosoms, or within their cradles, hear voices to which men are deaf; and how the orphaned ones receive the Christmas love-kiss on their slumbering lids.

Then a great peace and joy filled her heart with their harmonies, and she said, "All creatures are bidden to rejoice to-night. I, too, will keep the Master's feast." So she arose, and crept down the mill-stairs to the kitchen below, where the kindling fuel still smouldered upon the hearth. Then she lighted her lamp. She took forth from the chest of napery a cloth that her grandmother had woven in the days of her own youth. She spread the table, and placed upon it all that she could find in the poor household stores—the loaf of wheaten bread and the pitcher of water, and she laid the trencher and cup in the guest place, and drew the old oaken settles to her supper. Then Gretchen set wide open the house door to let the Yule tide in, and she sat down to break bread, and, through her childish tears of loneliness, she saw the light of her lamp, all blurred, fading upon the outward air, and presently rekindle into the light of stars, as it shone around the head of the Child who had come to be her midnight guest.

Oh, the beautiful dawn! Clad in its heaven robes of unspotted snow, with its ice jewels sparkling upon its breast, it came in fair presence down from the mountain top! The great king of the East came from afar with golden gifts to do it homage. The smoke from the home-hearths rose up as from pious censers to greet it; the bells in the distant towers signalled its approach; the voices of the children shouted a welcome into the clear cold air. Even the cocks in the farmyard stood upon tiptoe to make themselves heard. The cattle lowed from the stalls, and the birds, in a fine commotion, flew hither and thither, twittering as if they, too, had been bidden by the Master to his feast.

But Hans, the miler, was in no trim to meet it. Surely he had been drinking of the dark wine of the Evil One, which turns to poison in the veins. His eyes were all red and bloodshot, and sunk abashed from meeting the pure angel of light. His beard was untrimmed, and his clothes were awry, as if those unholy companions had plucked at them with graceless fingers, saying, "Abide with us; are we not brethren?"

Then as he stood in sullen shame, opening softly his door, lest some passing neighbor should see him, a sweet fragrance smote him, that was certainly not alone the heavenly breathing of the young morning. Oh, wonder! what was this? Had he lost consciousness of the time in the fumes of the debauch, and was it the golden summer that the bells rang out so joyously to meet? But no. The mill-stream wore its holiday garb of ice. The snow harvest rose above the silent fields. The frosty air was keen, and where it breathed left winter jewels. And yet! Hans rubbed his eyes. Where yesterday only the bare brown twigs had interlaced each other around the porch, now clustered

the shining green leaves, and the red roses opened their hearts to the day.

Then as one who comes from darkness into light, he stumbled and groped; and it was as if some strong cruel grasp held him back from his threshold; and he would fain have turned and fled to hide himself in the dim recesses of the forest, for a vague terror fell upon him. Then, as he put forth his hand as one who wards a blow, his little maiden stood at the door, and took hold of him and drew him in, as to a city of refuge from the power of the soul pursuer forever; and she led him to the table where the Guest Child had broken bread at the midnight hour, and behold! the lowly vessels ranged upon it were transformed into pure gold, and the water within the chalice was now generous wine that might have been trodden out in the vineyards of the sun.

And now the mists of the past, lifted for so brief a space, gather again, and rise a golden vapory haze, through which, as in some poet's dream, the people walk transfigured in the glow. But always is little Gretchen, as one of the pure shining ones, whom some mysterious sign had set apart from her fellows, just as in old time it lingered on the three who had been up with the Master on the Mount. The miller passes under that marvellous transfiguration into a staid, grave burgher in velvet raiment, befitting his dignities, and with belt well stored with broad pieces for the needy.

So the benediction fell even upon Hans. It touched the beams and rafters of the old mill, and all prospered beneath its roof, as the place which the Lord of all had blessed; and presently upon the spot so honored, was raised, by pious hands, that noble pile which travellers come from far distant lands reverently to visit. And as they are led to Our Lady's chapel, where stands the shrine of the Child and his Blessed Mother, devoutly removed from the old abbey church, they see beneath, carved in the pure white marble, a recumbent figure of a little maiden, with meekly folded hands. And as the light enters through the painted pane, it seems as if saints and martyrs cast down their purple and golden glories to enwrap her in their pomp, and as if the shadow of those outspread hands above, still fell and rested in mystic benediction upon her head. Then, as from distant aisles comes the chanting of priests, and as the great flood of harmony surges through the space, and as the strong young life of the mighty city of to-day is faintly heard, in a blent busy murmur, from the walls without, the sacristan tells the traveller in hushed tones the Legend of Gretchen's Guest.

THE LAST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

'Tis desolate out on field and mere,
And all about the moorlands drear;
The wind's weird voices come and go
With a murmured sobbing, faint and low,
Like the mourners in a burial-crowd;
Each wild-wood creature is in its lair,
For the cold is sharp in the freezing air,
And the earth is wrapped in a snowy shroud.

Faintly shimmers the frozen stream,
And the hoar-frost shines with a ghostly gleam,
For the depths of the vast unclouded skies
Are filled with numberless starry eyes;
Through the beech-trees' leafless branchery
Downward sparkles their solemn light;
In the shadow and loneliness of night
They are watching to see the old year die.

Into the dim realms of the Past
The gray old year is journeying fast;
Without—the moonbeam's pallid glow
Quivers above his icy brow;
Within—the fire burns low and red,
And the hanging holly-boughs and bays
Throw shadows strange in the flickering blaze
On the panelled walls and overhead.

And now from out the crypt-like gloom
And stillness of the quiet room,
Across the red, uncertain light,
Dim shapes are wavering to my sight
In long procession: they speak no word;
There is no sound of echoing feet;
But cold and low my pulses beat,
By the airy sense of their presence stirred.

They are the ghosts of joys long dead,
Of bright hours vanished, and fair scenes fled;
Of hopes that sprung with the springing year,
Only to fall when the leaf fell sere;
And sorrowful memories, pale and wan,
With the clinging dust of departed years;
And my eyes are filled with regretful tears,
And my heart cries out for the days that are gone!

CHINESE SOCIALISM.

"It is a curious fact," said M. Huc in his work on the Chinese Empire, "that the greater part of those social theories which have lately thrown the public mind of France into a ferment, and which are represented as the sublime results of the progress of human reason, are but exploded Chinese Utopias, which agitated the Celestial Empire centuries ago." As far back as the eleventh century, the Chinese nation appears to have presented a spectacle very nearly analogous to that of which several countries in Europe, and France especially, have of late years been the scene. The great and knotty questions of social and political economy which are now in agitation in the West, at that period filled all speculative minds in China, and split into parties all classes of society. Those people who, in ordinary circumstances, seem quite indifferent to the proceedings of their government, on that occasion flung themselves passionately into the discussion of systems which aimed at an immense social revolution, and which kept the general public mind for a long time in a state of desperate excitement. The thing promised and attempted by the reforming party, was a total renovation of the social system — an all-pervading Communism, under the control of a despotic centralization; and after enormous agitation, the prophet or leader of the movement actually gained an opportunity of reducing his experiment to practice, on a scale commensurate with the extent and resources of the kingdom.

The name of this Socialist reformer was Wang-gan-ché, a man famous in Chinese history—a man, too, so far as we can learn, remarkable for talent, intellectual cultivation, and for a force of will which qualified him to take a leading part in statesmanship. He could speak with grace and eloquence; had the art of giving weight to all he said; and knew, moreover, how to throw an air of magnitude and importance over trifling things when his interest might require it. His private life was regular, and modelled after the most unexceptionable pattern of Chinese respectability. This much is recorded of him in the way of commendation. On the other hand, he is represented as being exceedingly ambitious; as "a man who thought any means lawful to gain his ends; self-willed to obstinacy, when he had to support an opinion he had once advanced; haughty, and filled with an idea of his own merits, esteeming only what agreed with his own opinions and views of politics, and desirous of uprooting and utterly destroying the old institutions of his country, to replace them with new ones of his own invention."

He seems to have addressed himself to the work in a deliberate and decided fashion, quietly feeling his way, and covertly preparing the public mind for the acceptation of his novel doctrines. To forward his object, he imposed upon himself a long, difficult, and

even repulsive task; this was to make voluminous commentaries on all the sacred and classical writings, wherein he took occasion to insinuate his own opinions; and to compose a universal dictionary, in which he gave to certain words an arbitrary meaning, to favor his enterprise. By thus ingeniously intruding and enforcing his political notions, he gradually gained adherents, and, in course of time, had raised himself to a position of commanding influence. The Emperor Chen-tsoung, charmed with his brilliant qualities, gave him his entire confidence, and intrusted him with all the powers required for realizing his schemes of social regeneration. The executive offices and the tribunals were soon filled with persons of his own selection, on whom he could rely as active partisans; and the business of innovation and reform was straightway vigorously commenced.

The object of Wang-gan-ché as a reformer, was nothing less than that of procuring infallible happiness for the entire population; and the means by which he thought to effect it, lay in the development and equitable distribution of the resources of the empire, so as to afford to every one the greatest possible amount of material enjoyments. "The first and most essential duty of a government," said he, "is to love the people, and to procure them the real advantages of life—which are plenty and pleasure. To accomplish this object, it would suffice to inspire every one with the unvarying principles of rectitude; but as all might not observe them, the state should explain the manner of following these precepts, and enforce obedience by wise and inflexible laws. In order to prevent the oppression of man by man, the state should take possession of all the resources of the empire, and become the sole master and employer. The state should take the entire management of commerce, industry, and agriculture into its own hands, with the view of succoring the working-classes, and preventing their being ground to dust by the rich."

Any one on reading this curious manifesto, will detect in it a striking resemblance to some of the writings and harangues of our modern French and English Socialists; though there is no reason to believe that the latter were at all acquainted with Wang-gan-ché, or the political dogmas which he propounded to his nation in the eleventh century. Theories of this kind would seem to be the spontaneous product of speculative minds under various forms of civilization, and may have sprung as naturally out of the disordered relations of one period and people as of another. The same ideas appear and reappear in history, according to certain inherent laws of the human mind, acted upon by similarity of circumstance. A state of discontent, occasioned by a wide discrepancy in the condition of different classes, will produce conceptions of remedy essentially alike, in all ages and in all countries. The only differences that may be expected, are the varied developments or modifications which the ideas receive from differences of race and culture. Thus, in times like our own, when the political tendency is towards democracy,

these ideas will seek to express themselves in democratic regulations; whereas in communities accustomed to a rigid centralization, they will claim a recognition by means of despotic changes. That there should be so marked a resemblance between the doctrines of a Chinese reformer of the eleventh century, and those of European theorists, who claim to be the latest reformers of the nineteenth, is a coincidence which seems to establish the identity of human sentiment and aspiration in all the varied races and social aggregations of mankind. All alike are liable to disarrangements and perplexities in their social organization; and, under the pressure of uncomfortable circumstances, all alike are apt to fly in their bewilderment to Utopian experiments for relief.

It is the peculiarity of our Chinese regenerator, that he alone, among all the Socialists we have heard of, had the great advantage of being able to reduce his experiment to practice. According to the regulations of his plan, tribunals were established throughout the empire, fixing the price of provisions and merchandise; and taxes were imposed for a number of years, to be paid solely by the rich. The tribunals were to decide who was rich and who was poor. The money thus collected was to be reserved in the coffers of the state, to be distributed to aged paupers, to workmen out of employ, and to whomsoever there might be who was judged to stand in need of it. The state, moreover, was declared the only proprietor of the soil; in each district, the tribunals were to assign the land annually to the farmers, and distribute among them the seed necessary to sow it, on condition that the loan should be repaid, either in grain or other provisions, after the harvest was gathered in; and in order that all the land should be profitably cultivated, the officers of the tribunals were charged to fix what kind of crop was to be grown.

"It is evident," said the partisans of the scheme, anticipating the plausibilities of our modern Socialists, "that by these means abundance and happiness will reign throughout the land. The only people who can suffer by this state of things are the usurers and monopolists, who never fail to profit by famine and all public calamities, to enrich themselves and ruin the working-classes. But what great harm will it be to put an end at last to the exactions of these enemies of the people? Does not justice require that they should be forced to make restitution of their ill-gotten gains? The state will henceforth be the only creditor, and will never take interest. As it will watch over agriculture, and fix the current price of provisions, there will always be a supply proportionate to the harvest. In case of famine in any one spot, the great agricultural tribunal of Pekin, informed by the principal tribunals of the various harvests of the empire, will easily restore the equilibrium, by causing the superfluity of the fertile provinces to be transported into those which are a prey to want. Thus the necessaries of life will be always sold at a moderate price; there will no longer be

any classes in want; and the state, being the only speculator, will realize enormous profits annually, to be applied to works of public utility."

A revolution so radical as is here implied, involving the destruction of all large fortunes, however acquired, and the reduction of all classes to a uniform condition, was not likely to be sanctioned or acquiesced in by the owners and friends of property. Some degree of opposition from them, of at least a temporary sort, was only natural and inevitable. We accordingly find, that the property interest for the time being had also its representative among Chinese statesmen, who argued and contended manfully against the Communist innovation. This was an accomplished poet and eminent literary personage, named Sse-ma-kouang, one of the most illustrious men in Chinese history, a wise Conservative, who, standing resolutely on the ancient ways, had sufficient penetration to discern the fallacy of the revolutionary policy. The chronicles of the time relate, that on the side of Sse-ma-kouang were seen all the most distinguished men of the empire, whether renowned for wit, experience, talents, judgment, or rank; but it is obvious that they must have been immeasurably outnumbered by the partisans of Wang-gan-ché, whom, doubtless, the emperor supported in his reforms, because they were acceptable to the general population. A revolution of so sweeping and radical a character could not have been possibly accomplished against the sense and wishes of the nation, even under a despotism like that of China, any more than in France or England; since, in reality, the Chinese government, though an unquestionable despotism, has always been a despotism tempered largely by the influences of popular opinion. It is not to be denied, however, that Wang-gan-ché had to contend with considerable clamor, and perhaps some violent attacks, from the party that naturally stood up for property; and in his conduct under these formidable assaults, though nowise sympathizing with the principles he represented, we fancy we can discern in him a genuine statesman-like steadfastness and imperturbability. Thoroughly persuaded of the soundness of his own policy, he set himself calmly to bear the brunt of whatever obloquy or opposition it might encounter, patiently reading the declamations and satires which his enemies, from time to time, presented to the emperor under the name of respectful representations, humble supplications, and so forth; but being no more moved by them, than as if they had not in any way concerned him. In this total indifference to clamor, he showed himself possessed of one of the most essential of a statesman's qualifications. The partial dissatisfactions occasioned by his novel measures, he doubted not, would be certain to subside as their success became apparent, and meanwhile he could complacently abide his time. "Beginnings," said he, "are always difficult, and it is only after overcoming many obstacles that a man can hope to reap the fruit of his labor. . . . . Ministers, nobles, and mandarins have all risen against me. I am not

surprised at it; they cannot quit the common routine, and adopt new customs. Little by little, they will grow used to these innovations, their natural aversion will die away, and they will end by applauding what they are now so eager to decry."

The completeness of his own persuasion secured his ascendency. Throughout the reign of the Emperor Chen-tsoung, Wang-gan-ché maintained his power; put all his plans in execution; and effected an entire revolution. He even attempted to remodel the national scriptures; causing his own commentaries on the sacred books to be adopted, and ordaining that the signification of the characters should be referred to the great dictionary which he had himself composed. Everything was changed by the genius and the will of this one man; and if Chinese society could have been regenerated by any such method of reconstruction as he devised, there was nothing wanting, so far as the power and resources of the reformer went, to have raised it to a state of absolute perfection. But a centralized Communism was no cure for the evils it was designed to rectify. According to Chinese historians, this great social revolution was utterly unsuccessful; and the nation became, by means of it, more deeply plunged in misery than ever. The express effects of its operation are not on record, or, at any rate, are not furnished by our authority; but of its complete failure, there is sufficient evidence in the fact, that after some years' trial of the experiment, the country returned to its former habits, and society was reconstituted on the old imperfect basis. The defects of the ancient system might be manifold and obvious enough, but they were felt to be less intolerable than those that were produced by a system which levelled all the natural gradations of hereditary and personal acquisition, and tended to extinguish every effort of independent enterprise.

On the death of Chen-tsoung, the empress, who succeeded him as regent during the minority of his son, almost immediately deposed Wang-gan-ché from his place in the administration, and made his old enemy, Sse-ma-kouang, prime-minister and governor of the prospective emperor. The first act of the old conservative was to efface every trace of the government of his predecessor, who, we learn, died shortly afterwards—probably from chagrin and disgust at the overturn of his reformation. Sse-ma-kouang, however, did not long survive him; and the two have since stood side by side in history, to point the moral of their opposing policies. Sse-ma-kouang had most honor at his departure, and his memory was long embalmed in the national admiration and affection. The old annals tell that when he died, the public grief was universal: "the shops were closed; the people went into mourning; and the women and children who could not kneel beside his coffin, prostrated themselves before his portrait in the interior of their houses. These signs of sorrow accompanied the funeral, wherever it appeared, on its way to the native place of Sse-ma-kouang."

To the universality of this sorrowing demonstration, we suppose we must except the disciples and

adherents of the Socialist reformer, who, in all likelihood, were more disposed to rejoice than mourn at the event. It, indeed, opened for them a second opportunity of imposing their system upon the country, and they left no means unemployed by which that object could be accomplished. They insinuated themselves into favor with the youthful emperor, and he, on arriving at age, reinvested them with power. Eleven years after the death of Sse-ma-kouang, everything he had done was overturned, and himself stripped of all his posthumous titles, and declared to have been the enemy of the kingdom. His tomb was destroyed, and the marble monument bearing his epitaph ignominiously cast down. In the place of it another was erected, bearing an enumeration of all the crimes a lying imagination could attribute to him; many of his writings were burnt; and his name was never mentioned by the ascendant faction, except with hatred and reviling. Meanwhile, the memory of Wang-gan-ché was publicly restored to honor, and his political system pursued with uncompromising earnestness. "In reading the history of these sudden changes of popular opinion," says M. Huc, "we might well imagine it was written of some European nation."

The Socialist economy, however, for the second time proved a failure. Scarcely had three years elapsed before it was finally abandoned, and the name of its originator loaded with execration. And now the Socialist party became the objects of an unrelenting persecution, and were eventually obliged to fly the country. This occurred in or about the year 1129, just at the time when the terrible Ghengis Khan was rising into power in the steppes of Tartary, which were soon to pour forth as conquerors their numberless barbarians. This coincidence is worthy of being noted, as it was to Tartary that the Chinese Socialists, in large troops, betook themselves; where, leading a vagabond and unsettled life, they soon communicated their unquiet spirit to the Mongol tribes, and are believed to have been influential in stimulating them to that dreadful career of devastation on which they shortly entered under the command of their ferocious leader. Already remarkable for their fierce and savage disposition, it may be readily imagined what a monstrous combination was produced by the union of these people with the outcasts of Chinese civilization. What might be anticipated from the ascendency of Socialist principles in Europe, in the present era, it would be impossible to tell; but that their application and development here would be more happy or successful than formerly in China, we cannot, with our present lights, see any reason for concluding. It is true, our modern Socialism is a democratic movement, whilst that of China was a thoroughly despotic one; yet it seems to us that in any effort to realize a Communistic system, the democratic element must gradually disappear before a necessary centralizing tendency, which, however different in the form it takes and in the objects which it proposes to attain, would eventually produce a despotism as rigid as any that has ever existed.

THE CHURCH PROGRESSIVE.

THE Church unquestionably stands at the head of the influences that have civilized mankind. If Guizot's definition of civilization, "the reform and elevation of society through the reform and elevation of the individual," is true, and that it is true the Protestant schools of history admit, then the Church must be regarded as the civilizer by excellence. Home, with its manifold influences, is deemed a powerful agency in the formation of individual perfection, and to the Church, under Christ, the modern world owes all expressed by those tender words—"home," and "the family circle." Heathenism made the family and all its relations subject to the supreme arbitrament of the state. Deformed children were destroyed as prospectively unfit for military service. Infanticide was one of the most prevalent crimes of heathendom. It was the Babe of Bethlehem that saved His little fellows. The stability of the family is based on the indissolubility of the marital tie. This the Church has ever upheld and preserved. By insisting on it, the Church formed society into families and kin, throwing about them defences and safeguards of liberty and happiness, and out of the Christian family the civilized state, such as we have it, arose. Here is the first step in that march of progress in which the Church leads humanity. We often hear the axioms proved by a thousand years of experience that the family is the social unit. It was the Church that taught and realized the axioms which all statesmanship and political science accept as fundamental.

After reforming the family, she reformed the state. Heathen statesmanship proceeded on the assumption that the governed were created for the governors. The Pyramids overshadowed a multitude of toiling slaves who were taught to regard their sovereign as God, the Supreme Disposer of their lives and fortunes. Republican Greece and Rome never were republican in the Christian sense. The Church on the downfall of the Roman Empire took the barbarians in hand, shaped their wild chieftains into stable forms of government, and gave to their disunited clans an organic form. Guizot admits that the Church originated the idea of election, personal freedom, the right of the people to rebel against despotism, municipal independence, and the abolition of slavery. Here then is the Church fashioning the two elements of all progress,—the family and the free state. Without these subsisting in the relations established by her, all progress is impossible. To her, as to source and fountain, all modern progress and civilization can therefore be traced.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SERMONS BY THE FATHERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE, NEW YORK. Vol. VI. New York: Catholic Publication Society, 1871. 12mo., pp. 331.

The subjects treated of in this volume of sermons are, Remembrance of Mercies, The Gifts of the Maji, How to Pass a Good Lent, Pretended and Real Christians, The Sins and Miseries and the Dram Seller, Communion with Jesus, The Holy Ghost the Comforter, The Duty of Upholding the Pope's Temporal Sovereignty, The Living God, The Real Presence, St. Paul the Divine Orator, The Value of Faith, The Supremacy of St. Peter, The Roman Pontiffs the Successors of St. Peter, The Thought of Heaven, The Clergy the Teachers of the People, Humility in Prayer, Preparation for a Good Death, The King's Marriage Feast, Good Use of Sickness, Thoughts for Advent, and Fraternal Charity. They are all characterized by the vigor of thought, unction, and impressiveness that have made the sermons of the Paulists looked for by all classes of Christians. Whilst it seems invidious to point to any one of the discourses as particularly excellent, we cannot withhold our admiration from the ones on Remembrance of Mercies, The Dram Seller, and The Supremacy of St. Peter, and of his successors, the Popes. We have rarely read a gentler, more moving, or more appropriate sermon than the one first mentioned. Referring to New Year's Day, the season for the interchange of gifts and courtesies, the preacher aptly remarks: "I wish you to know whether you are grateful to God or not, to that God who has so loved us and crowned us with mercy and loving-kindness. At a time like this, when you are asking others to remember you, and when you are thinking of all the dear old friends you have had in bygone years, and of the sweet mementoes that came from their hands, or were spoken by their lips, I would compel you to see if you have remembered the oldest, the best Friend of all. Alas! if you must say, He has been the last and the least in my thoughts, that would be sad to hear, and, above all, from the lips of those who, by their very faith, with all its blessed consolations, live so near to God."

The discourse on dram selling is a scathing review of the miseries inflicted on the community by the practice denounced. The sins of the dealer are said to be against the virtues of justice and charity. The following extract will show its force and character: "But they (the dram sellers) know the fact as well as I know it, that scarcely one drop is dealt out by them that is not more or less adulterated; that their so-called wines never saw the juice of the grape; that their brandies and rums and cordials are all composed of proof-spirits, coloring matter, drugs of the most poisonous character and of a deadly strength, and water. I am in possession of a document circulated privately among these manufacturers of 'imported wines and liquors,' which purports to give recipes for making any kind of wine, liquor, or cordial you can name, with the address of certain houses, where the drugs I have alluded to may be obtained."

In the sermons on the Pope, all the great arguments that establish his succession and jurisdiction are well brought out in popular style. The typography and general arrangement of the book sustain the high reputation which the Society has for issuing books in good style.

THE DEVIL; DOES HE EXIST, AND WHAT DOES HE DO? From the French of Father De la Porte. New York: Sadlier, 1871.

Mr. Sadlier, in presenting to the public a good translation of this valuable and interesting little work, has done a service. The book has passed through several editions in French, and, in the words of the Bishop Segur, it has contributed to bring about belief in the personal existence of Satan. The great triumph of the adversary in our time is that he has made men disbelieve in his existence. The author discusses, briefly but compre-

hensively, thirty questions connected with the doings, power, and character of the Evil One, and the means at hand to resist his influences. Several of these questions are at first sight amusing, and next startling; such as, for instance, "Is the Devil the Head of Secret Societies?"

"Every period has its miseries," says the author, in summing up his work; "the misery of our time is the so-called philosophical justification of evil. Our ancestors, too, knew human frailty; but they did not canonize disorder, and when they yielded to the unhappy inclinations of the flesh, they did not place it, with the august name of Reason, on an altar. We have progressed, and the justification of evil brings nowadays its natural consequence, the restoration of Satan, who first committed evil, and inspires it in us." The remedy of the evil is found in the Church, which possesses the salutary aids and graces with which the enemy is vanquished and humiliated.

THE AMERICAN ELOCUTIONIST AND DRAMATIC READER, for the use of Colleges, Academies, and Schools. By J. A. Lyons, A.M; with an elaborate introduction on Elocution and Vocal Culture, by the Rev. M. B. Brown, A.M. Philadelphia: Butler & Co., 1872. 12mo.

"*Orator fit*—the orator is made," runs the adage, and if it be true, this textbook will show any one how to become one. We believe, however, that oratorical power is mainly a natural gift, and that in its absence no amount of elocutionary instruction will make one more than a correct or pleasing speaker. But whether oratory is natural or acquired, the need of instruction and guidance remains the same. The greatest of orators have been those that devoted to study and practice of oratory the closest attention and the strictest observance of rule and gesture.

Hence we welcome any effort, however humble, to help students in learning to deliver a speech, declaim, or even to read well. We leave the reader to judge, therefore, how cordial and thorough is the welcome we give to Mr. Lyons's "Reader" on discovering that, in addition to a perfect selection of subjects for elocution, the book contains a scientific treatise on Elocution and Voice Culture, written by a reverend gentleman who evidently is thoroughly acquainted with the laws of speech and sound. He treats elocution first from a physical, and next from an æsthetic standpoint, the second part being devoted to an exhaustive treatise on voice culture.

The examples for rhetorical reading and declamation are, in the main, selected from recent speakers and writers, thus avoiding the hackneyed themes with which the older rhetorics are filled.

Pieces that could offend political or religious feelings are carefully excluded, and though Catholic oratory is prominent, it is not in controversical or polemic form. We bespeak for this textbook a hearty reception from all educators who can appreciate its merits. The publishers have spared no pains to issue the book perfect in typography, engravings, and binding.

FLORENCE O'NEIL. A Story of the Siege of Limerick. Baltimore: Kelly, Piet & Co.

We have here, in book form, the beautiful story which charmed the readers of the *Catholic Mirror* for some time. The story of the City of the Violated Treaty is told with strict adherence to historical truth. It is evident that the author had a wide field in such a subject as the one he chose; for the times in which he cast his scenes were stormy and eventful. The book, with handsome dress, would make a very suitable Christmas present.

A CONDENSED SCHOOL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. By Wm. Swinton, A.M. New York: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., 1871.

The points of novelty and superiority claimed for this book are, a plan of concise paragraphing, and a new method of topical reviews. These are certainly features which commend the volume to all practical teachers. The tone of treatment is free from partisan bias of sectionalism, politics or religion. The publishers have done their full share in the mechanical execution of the book. We have rarely seen a school book so neatly, attractively, and beautifully gotten up.

Sketches of Irish History. By M. F. Curack. Baltimore: Kelly, Piet & Co.

The distinguished authoress has gathered into this book the substance of half the ponderous tomes on Irish history. The romance and beauty of the early annals of the country are strictly portrayed in the sketches and descriptions given; whilst the gloomier records of the country's later years are relieved by the light cast by the faith of a people who sacrificed all to preserve it.

Ned Rusheen, or Who Fired the First Shot? By Sister Mary Frances Clares. Boston: Donahoe, 1871.

This pleasant novelette is descriptive of high life in Ireland. Its best recommendation is that it comes from the pen of Sister Mary Frances of the Poor Clares, the author of volumes which have already earned for her an enviable reputation, both here and in Ireland. Though the book before us is rather small compared with her other works, it is by no means insignificant in matter or manner. The old story of injured innocence, battling alone and without hope against the odium of dark suspicion, the consequence of one series of circumstantial evidence, is interestingly and gracefully told. Pure, earnest truth and the happy influence of religion is a leading feature of the tale. Religion consoles the hero in his trials and sufferings. It lights up the darkness of his disgrace, as by no fault of his own he is branded a felon. The moral of the story is that innocence, despite its accusers, will ever rise glorious in the morn of justice. Fine descriptions and forcible portraiture of scenes and situations also grace this interesting work. In striving to place before the public that which would rank amongst romances, whilst advocating religion and morality, the author has thoroughly succeeded. The publisher has brought out the book in excellent style.

Fardorougha the Miser, or the Convicts of Lisnamona. By William Carleton. New York: Sadlier, 1871.

This story of the famous delineator of Ireland is brought out in neat form. We have never specially admired Carleton's writings, nor is the Miser one of his best. Many of the descriptions, however, are singularly lifelike and natural, and the story is of sufficient interest to attract and please the reader.

Familiar Instructions on Mental Prayer. By the Abbe Courbon. Translated from the French by E. P. B. Edited by W. Gordon of the London Oratory. New York: Catholic Pub. Society, 1871.

Courbon was one of the great masters of the spiritual life that have appeared in the later ages of the Church. His ablest treatise on mental prayer was much prized by the late Dr. Faber. In view of the importance of mental prayer to progress in perfection, every Catholic should secure this excellent book, small and cheap, but rich and great in spiritual wealth.

Guide to the Union Pacific Railroad Lands. Omaha: 1870.

This is a descriptive pamphlet of the millions of acres of farming and mineral lands owned by the Union Pacific Railroad. It contains handsomely engraved maps, and much information is given, intended to aid persons contemplating emigration.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

To and From the Passion Play, in the Summer of 1871. By Rev. G. H. Doane, Pastor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Newark, N. J. Boston: Patrick Donahoe.

The Four Great Evils of the Day. By Henry Edward, Archbishop of Westminster. Boston: Patrick Donahoe.